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FRANK LESLIE'S

BOYS' AND GIRLS' WEEKLY.

An Illustrated Journal of Amusement, Adventure, and Instruction.

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Floating to Fortune; Or, Which was the Hero?

By JAMES REYNOLDS.

CHAPTER VII.

HERO.

THE recuperative energies of our hero were decidedly great. When he had finished picking the very last bone of the pullet that had been set before him—it must be confessed that his appetite was of the keenest, and without a suspicion of nausea caused by the sea in his stomach—Tom, with almost the agility of a monkey, bounded on deck, and with a curiosity that was evident to those at work on the rigging and sails of the swift-sailing little vessel, looked keenly and inquiringly about him. The day was perfect—that is, in the eyes of the sailors.

There was a steady eight-knot breeze from the northward and westward, and all sails being set, the pretty craft leaned gracefully on her port side and glided through the restless waters with "a clean keel and swift heel."

Moving to the starboard stern, Tom sprang upon the taffrail, and seizing a sheet to steady his body, looked wonderingly upon the open sea, bounded only by the horizon, and then at the caps of the light waves that seemed to chase the *Isabella* and break up the long, white track which she made in the great deep.

"This is glorious!" Tom exclaimed, as involuntarily he threw back his head and filled his lungs with the pure saline atmosphere. "Why, I feel as exhilarated as when they gave me that glass of champagne. I've often wished to be at sea. I've dreamed of it, both when sleeping and waking, and now I've realised it. It's a romance—it's grand—it's magnificent!" And then, forgetful of himself, Tom broke out in his rich and clear voice with:

"I'm a merry sailor lad,
With heart both
light and free;
I highly prize my gallant ship,
I love the dark-
blue sea."

The song was one with which he had long been familiar, and he poured it out with a full consciousness of its meaning. It was his soul's expression of gladness.

He was about to give the refrain, when a deep baritone immediately behind him caught up the words of the succeeding verse:

"I love to tread the deck,
Amid the howling gale,
And listen to the seagull's scream
And to the thunder's rail."

Tom swung himself around, and to his astonishment found the cook, with arms folded, gazing sadly out upon the waters as he sang.

"Why, doctor!" cried Tom Burt, "where did you pick up that song? Isn't it fine?"

"Yes, sah," answered the negro. "You see, I'se jus' hear you sing, an' you 'peared so tickled wif w'at you was a-lookin' at dat I t'ought I'd let you know dat 'pearances am deceitful sometimes. I'd bin mighty glad to be dn de sho'."

"I think, doctor, I'd like to be a sailor, and have command of just such a vessel as this is."

"Yes, sah," grinned the good-natured negro. "It's all nice now; but wait a while, an' you'll wish you'd neber seed de waves. De ocean am jus' like a woman, dey say. It's trescherous an' full ob mischief to dem dat follows it for a libin.' Dat's wot you'll find out when it's too late."

"Then why do you intrust yourself on it?" demanded Tom.

"Kase I can't help myself, sah! Dat's de reason. It ar' my perfession. I must eat, yo' see, an' to do dat I must cook."

The doctor laughed at his own joke.

Before Tom could continue the conversation the skipper called from the cabin to the helmsman: "How does she head?"

"Sou' by east, half-east, sir," was the man's answer.

"That's right. Keep her steady there."

As the captain spoke he emerged from the companion-way, and looking toward the north and west, scanned the heavens with a critical eye, and finally an assured look.

The first officer, who was now on duty, approached him.

"It bids fair to be a steady night, Mr. Coffin," remarked the skipper. "A little thick to the nor'ard."

"A pretty stiff breeze has been growing upon us. It's risen during the last hour from a seven to a ten-knotter," remarked the mate.

"Yes, and the barometer has fallen a little," responded the captain. "I think we won't have any trouble during the night. The little *Isabella* is a stanch seaboat, and she loves to dance over the white caps. All she wants is to be handled rightly—just as you would handle a racer on the course. Keep her up to her work and she won't disappoint you."

At this moment the *Isabella* struck her bow into a heavy cross-wave, and before she could lift herself out of it it broke over the port cathead and swept the deck to the waist, where it ran through the scuppers back into the sea.

The water thus unexpectedly shipped was

"TOM OPENED THE DOOR OF THE PANTRY BEFORE REPLYING, AND THERE HE FOUND THE DOCTOR ON HIS KNEES, THE BIBLE OPEN BEFORE HIM, AND A GLASS OF RUM IN ONE OF HIS HANDS."

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not of much moment, but our hero, who had approached to observe the captain and mate were, received it full on his back, and besides wetting him a second time to the skin, threw him prone, face downward, upon the deck.

Ere he could recover his erect posture he heard the deep voice of the doctor sing, in continuation of the song:

"When the billow rears its head."

"Yah, yah! he got him baptise that time, sho!" Then, in sober tones the cook added, "I likes de chile. I s'pects he'll be one ob dem sailor boys."

Tom laughed good-naturedly at his own mishap, but secretly resolved to be even with the doctor.

Captain Trousom and Mr. Coffin saw Tom rising from the deck, and for a moment he looked so forlorn that they could not help but laugh in chorus with the doctor.

"All right, my boy," said the skipper; "it's a sign that old Neptune likes you. All you have to do hereafter is to look out and hold fast."

"Oh, I ain't put out a bit, sir!" responded Tom; "only it isn't comfortable to have a bath with your clothes on—such as I had yesterday night and now."

"I must get you up a new rig," said the skipper, parenthetically. "These accidents will happen, and it's well to have some dry duds stowed away in your locker. You'd better go below and make yourself comfortable."

As Tom was about to comply with this suggestion he heard Mr. Coffin remark that he thought it would be well to reduce sail, now that it was getting toward sundown, as the breeze was steady enough to send the vessel at good speed during the night.

An hour later darkness set in, and the wind, which had now increased to almost a gale, whistled shrilly, and at times mournfully, through the rigging.

As the thermometer still showed an inclination to fall, and the waves to rise, and so toss the little vessel from combing to combing as buoyant as a cork, everything was made snug for the night.

As Tom sat in the cabin looking over and puzzling himself with the columns of figures in a book of logarithms, his clothes having been changed for him, he almost insensibly became very melancholy. The souching of the winds fell in low cadences on his ears; and as his mind reverted to the catastrophe which had so strangely taken him from his home and his employment, he could not restrain the tears which not only filled his eyes, but dropped from between his fingers upon the floor.

The skipper had been quietly watching Tom for several minutes, although seemingly he had been perusing a book that lay open before him—and on which the swaying lamp that hung from the ceiling cast at times a dark shadow as it did at others rays of light—and then said, in a low, kind voice:

"Home-sick, my lad?"

"It's all so very strange, sir," blurted poor Tom. "Why, at this hour yesterday I had no more idea of being at sea, fifty or a hundred miles from land, than I had of lifting myself on paper wings to the top of the steeple of Trinity Church."

"Strange, indeed, lad," returned the captain, softly; "but the great poet has written, 'There's a divinity that shapes our ends, rough-hew them as we may.' It's destiny."

"And, sir," resumed Tom, "they think I'm drowned—lost. Oh, I know what sad hearts my adopted mother and sister will carry in their bosoms for many a day, unless they should learn of my strange rescue. And there's poor Alice St. John! I feel for her as if she were really my own mother's daughter. I'm afraid she's going into decline. I went with her to the doctor one day, and when he had tested her lungs he cheered her up by telling her there was no real danger—that there was a little clogging of the air-pipes, and perhaps some inflammation of the lungs; but if she took care of herself she would be all right in a little while. I looked in the doctor's face as he said this, and I felt that he meant just the contrary—that he was telling a falsehood—he looked so anxious."

"Well, never mind now, my lad," resumed the skipper, in a more cheerful tone. "You are quite assured that she didn't slip into the water, and she may yet be all right, as the doctor said she would be. Anyhow, we've all got to go down to Davy Jones's locker some time, and I don't see but it as well to take things philosophically as to our voyage to that port whether we undertake it in early or in later years. Those who shuffle off this mortal coil early—in the bloom, the morning, of life—when everything looks fair, and the path is strewn with roses, are perhaps the best off. It may be true that they go into the other world without the experience of the more aged; but, youngster, how many storms, how many shipwrecks of body, of heart, of head and of soul they escape! But I'm at Captain Trousom. Where are you sailing? Ha, ha!" and the skipper chuckled and rubbed his hands briskly; "and so you're getting sentimental, eh? Well, my lad, never mind me. Go on with your dreaming. My golden visions were dissipated long ago. Keep yours as long as you can. I suppose it's too early yet to ask you how you like on the ocean wave?"

Thus strangely diverted from his own thoughts, Tom looked up, smilingly, and answered:

"First-rate, sir. How grand the ocean looks! I seem to expand—to grow up to the stature of a giant while watching it as it rose and fell, and the white crests of the waves made me feel as if I were looking down upon a great city. It was a curious impression, and while yet entranced with it I began to sing a verse of the 'Sailor Boy.' I had scarcely closed the first lines when a mighty voice behind me took up the words and poured them out grandly. I turned around, and I found it was that big, good-natured cook—the doctor, as you call him—who had interrupted me."

"You've not felt sick—seasick—yet?" questioned the captain.

"No, sir; I never felt lighter, stronger, or more buoyant than I do at this moment. Why, I feel as if I'd been drinking wine."

"I'm glad of that," said the skipper. "It shows that, naturally, you are a good sailor. The cook on board most vessels is nicknamed doctor. It's an old custom."

"You spoke of a barometer, sir," continued Tom. "I've often heard of it. How does it tell you of coming storms?"

The captain pointed to a long instrument that was hanging suspended, but swinging freely, from the side of the cabin.

"That is a barometer. It isn't always infallible; still it helps. The pressure upon the fluid in the tube is governed by the conditions of the atmosphere. Thus, when the fluid rises and the wind is southerly, we may calculate on fine weather; a rapid fall indicates stormy weather; when the barometer is steady, and the air dry, we may reckon on fine weather; and a fall, with northerly winds—such as we now have—indicates storm, and so on. If you read the disk of the instrument and watch the contraction and expansion of the fluid in the tube, you will soon learn its indications. They may prove of use to you, whether on land or sea."

"And," continued Tom, his curiosity aroused, "I heard Mr. Coffin say to one of the men that he would not permit him to take a trick at the wheel until he had learned to 'box the compass,' and that he was only a landlubber for not knowing that much of a sailor's business. Now, what is meant by 'boxing the compass'? Why, a child could do that much, it seems to me. Did he mean how he must put the compass in a box?"

The skipper leaned back and fairly roared with laughter—roared until the tears stood in his eyes—upon hearing Tom's queer conceit.

When he had sufficiently recovered from his cachinnatory fit, at which his questioner wondered, and felt decidedly abashed because of it, he said:

"Well, lad, boxing the compass is only another way of saying reading it. You see—but hold, I'll ask the man at the helm how the vessel is heading, and you shall hear what he says."

The skipper advanced to the companion-way and inquired what the course was.

The answer came back:

"South by east, sir."

"Now, youngster," resumed the captain, "that reply shows that the man at the wheel knows what he is about. To-morrow I will teach you how to read the compass. It may be learned in five minutes by a smart lad—such as you are. At present I will simply say that the cord of the compass, over which is suspended the magnet, or else fastened to the north side of it, is divided into the cardinal, or chief points—that is, into east, west, north and south, and these are again divided and subdivided into southeast, northwest, and so on, and again the whole circle is marked off into degrees—equal to the earth's circumference—that is, into one hundred and eighty degrees. Now, when the man said the *Isabella* was on a south by east course, he was sure to understand that she was going south, but trending at the same time a degree or so to the east. To-morrow——"

Before his skipper could proceed further with his lecture on the compass, upon which subject he seemed desirous of displaying himself, somewhat after the manner of a college professor, the deep, strong bark of a dog was heard without, as his feet scratched upon and his body brushed against the closed cabin-door.

"Ah, ha!" cried the captain, rising from his seat and moving toward the entrance. "There's Nero come to pay me his nightly visit. He's a splendid Newfoundlander, and of the purest strain. You must know him, boy."

The skipper opened the door, and a great, black, splendid-looking animal bounded into the cabin, and with every expression of joy began to leap upon his master.

CHAPTER VIII.

A BIRD IN FULL PLUMAGE.

AS Tom was a lover of the dog it was not long before he was on the most friendly terms with the intelligent Nero, who seemed instinctively attracted to him; and it was well on toward the middle watch ere he sought his berth and temporary oblivion.

Although not over-anxious about his friends in Brooklyn, he yet wondered how soon it would be his happiness to see them again, but did remain long awake pondering his adventures. The vessel was now under full way, and as she oscillated but little, even when struck by a heavier wave than usual, Tom felt no annoyance from her movements, and was presently in as profound sleep as he had ever enjoyed on shore.

How long he had been slumbering he could not determine, when he was suddenly awakened by the furious barking of Nero, and the hurried movements, immediately over his head on deck, of the men.

"There he is!" he heard a voice say. "Now, boys, jump into the boat and pull for your lives. He's just off the lee-quarter. And you men there, let go the main-sheet and bring her to hard aport. That's it; that's it!"

Tom heard the sails beat against the masts and rigging, and it seemed to him that he was being swung around on a pivot.

The barking of Nero became fiercer; and once or twice he managed to open the cabin-door in order to reach the deck.

The captain ran out of his stateroom and made for the companion-way.

Upon pushing back the hatch, through which, for the present, they could not go, even if he had willed so to do, the Newfoundlander sprang, and then with another bound he was in the sea and making his way toward the object, now floating astern, that had caused the alarm.

"What is the matter, Mr. Coffin?" cried Captain Trousom. "Has anything serious happened?"

"Yes; the doctor but a moment ago walked out of his berth, in one of his usual somnambulic sleeps, and singing something about the billow rearing its head, tumbled into the sea. See, sir, there he is, and may be saved."

"The doctor overboard!" exclaimed Tom Burt, as he dashed from his berth. "I'm a good swimmer; perhaps I can——"

Before he had finished the sentence he followed, almost naked as he was, in the footsteps of the skipper to the deck.

Instantly upon emerging from the cabin, in the phosphorescent light of the waves, as they were broken by the breeze which beat against them, he perceived a dark object struggling as if toward the vessel.

Without pausing to consider the great risk he was incurring, Tom pushed past the captain and mate, who were standing near the wheel, watching the struggles of the men in the boat in their efforts against the wind to reach the drowning man, and in another instant was in the sea, battling with the waves.

Strong of arm and courageous of heart, Tom struck out manfully and untiringly, and soon found himself by the side of Nero, who was now scarcely two fathoms length from the doctor.

"Good dog!" said Tom, as, with his right hand, he encouragingly touched the courageous brute.

Nero gave a short, quick bark of recognition and then resumed his efforts to reach the negro, whom he well knew was one of his best friends.

"Hello, doctor!" cried Tom, as he put a hand upon the shoulder of the cook, "what are you doing here?"

The negro looked around in a dazed manner, and answered like one who had just been aroused from a deep sleep:

"Well, I doesn't know, sah, how I came in har. I t'ought I was in bed, but, golly, I isn't! How I come har I'se sho I don't know."

"Walked overboard when asleep?" queried Tom.

"S'pects dat's it, sah," replied the doctor. "An' dar's Nero, I'clare to gracious! Well, dat critter's a knowin' animile!"

The dog barked joyfully upon reaching the cook, and lay quietly, as if resting on the surface of the water. Seemingly, he was persuaded his human friend, to whom he was indebted for many a choice mouthful of meat, was in good hands, and that any effort on his part, beyond an encouraging bark, would be superfluous.

"I'm not afraid now, sah," resumed the cook. "I'se wide awake, an' I kin swim like a whale, an' dat wilout blowin' much. De on'y trouble wil me is dat some night I'll go overboard an' no one 'll see me, an' dar will be no boat 'll be lowered to pick me up, an' den dat'll be de end ob Cicero Pliny—dat's my real name, sah; on'y dey call me, bein' cook, doctor. Are you tired, Mars Burt?"

"Oh, not at all," Tom replied. "I'm used to the water. I've always been rated by my friends a first-rate swimmer. I could tread the water all night, and how very warm it is! Why, I thought the water'd be cold out here."

"S'pects, sah," responded the negro, "dat we'se in de Gulf Stream now, an' dat is always warmer dan is de regular water ob de sea. Cur'ous, isn't it, sah?"

The boat had by this time reached the place where Tom, the cook and the doctor, were apparently as comfortable as on board the *Isabella*.

"Hallo! doctor," cried the bow oarsman. "Are you alive an' kickin'? an' you've got the youngster I picked up half dead from cold in the bay of New York! It seems to me you must be fond of getting overboard, young gentleman."

"I jumped over to save a fellow-creature's life, if I could," Tom responded.

"Well, it's dangerous work," returned the man, "an' I'd advise you not to try it on too often. Suppose the doctor should drown him, what a fix you'd a been in. You'd go down to some marmaid's cave, sure, an' hev your ha'r combed for you. Come now, get into the boat. I s'pect the captain or Mr. Coffin 'll give you blazes for this—both on you."

"Get in, Mass Burt," said the negro. "I'll help you, sah."

"Oh, never mind me," returned Tom, quietly. "I'm strong enough to take care of myself."

Swimming, however, toward the boat, he called Nero to him, and then seizing him around the body, succeeded, with the assistance of the seamen, in getting him over the gunwale, where, dog-like, he commenced shaking the water from his black, shaggy coat, to the great discomfort of the men, and the delight of Tom, who, notwithstanding but a shirt on his back, was not inconvenienced.

In another minute, the boat, with the rescued on board, now shivering from the night-air, which was several degrees colder than the water, headed for the brigantine.

On regaining the deck Tom found, to his surprise, that his certainly heroic effort to save the doctor was not appreciated—quite the contrary. The skipper approached Tom with a frown on his face that was far from agreeable, and said:

"Youngster, suppose you had lost your life what would your friends have said to me when I got back to New York?"

Tom laughed quietly, and answered:

"You must please excuse me just at present about young people making the voyage to Davy Jones's locker, and so escaping the troubles and storms which those who are longer here are called on to endure."

The skipper smiled as he recalled his little bit of sentimentalism, and turning to the mate, whispered:

"You'd better give the boy a taste of that brandy as well as the doctor. He deserves it, and it may prevent his taking cold."

Mr. Jones handed a tin cup, into which he had poured a pretty strong dose of the exhilarating liquor, to Tom, who, upon tasting it, said:

"It's very strong, sir. May I give some of it to Nero?"

Without waiting for permission he called the sagacious creature to him, and bidding him open his mouth, poured half of the dose down his throat.

The brute did not seem particularly pleased with the trick which had thus been played upon him, and ran about the deck coughing, whining, and barking angrily.

This did not last long, however.

As soon as the fumes of the brandy had got into the poor brute's head, he found himself staggering along the deck, and expounding out his legs how he himself from tumbling over. His movements were exceedingly ludicrous, and captain and mate, equally with the crew, could not restrain their merriment.

Nero wagged his tail slowly and looked sleepily out of his eyes, and yet, withal, he seemed to feel that he was conducting himself in a silly manner, precisely as men do who are made half drunk. At length, with a great effort, he shook forward, and getting behind some rubbish that had been temporarily placed there, lay down and was presently in a sound sleep.

When, after many hours, he awakened, he walked soberly and sheepishly toward the caboose, where he stretched himself before the furnace, his head resting between his huge, web-like paws, and apparently thinking, and greatly grieved at the trick or the affront which had been put upon him by his new-found acquaintance, Tom Burt.

With the doctor he was on as friendly terms as ever, but when our hero approached him a dangerous light filled his eyes, and there came from him a low, steady, concentrated growl, which told him almost as plain as words could, to beware—not to be too familiar—but with the reckonings of the benevolentseress of youth, Tom persisted in approaching Nero. He could not comprehend the anger of the dog when he only sought to do him good.

Again Nero growled and his eyes blazed.

"I tell yo', Mars Burt," said the cook, "you'd better lef dat animile alone. You've 'tended him, an' he won't be friendly—leastways, not jes' now."

"Oh, he's a good dog to tease, doctor," said Tom, as he advanced to Nero, and was about to place a hand on his head.

The dog, however, evaded his touch, and with an angry growl made a spring at his throat, into which he would have buried his powerful fangs, and then torn it open, had not the doctor, who knew the savage nature of the creature when aroused, and who had been on the watch, seized him by the collar and pulled him, with all the physical force he possessed, from his intended attack; then, taking a switch, he led the dog forward to his kennel, and fastened him therein with a small but strong chain.

"The dog's dignity is greatly hurt, that's quite evident," murmured Tom, as he left the caboose and walked toward the stern of the vessel, where he found Captain Trousom pacing up and down, stopping, however, every minute or so and looking eastward.

Low down in the horizon he had caught sight of the topmasts of a ship, and he was endeavoring to make out her course.

"I think," he said, as Tom approached him, "the ship which is rising in the east and there is homeward bound. Now, boy, if you're inclined to go back to New York I will signal and run down to her—although it'll take me out of my course a few knots, which, to avoid the Bermudas I've shipped to due south—and put you on board her. What say ye, eh?"

Tom paused a moment before replying. Sea-life thus far had been pleasant to him; yet he was anxious—his friends should know he was yet in the flesh, and intended to continue therein as long as he possibly could.

"To go back is hard work and worse confinement than I'm subjected to here, and with no chance of advancement in life and knowledge. I like the *Isabella* and her captain, and he appears to like me—he always treats me as if he did. Now, if I remain with him I can pick up some knowledge of seamanship, and who knows but that some day I may be master of my own trim little bark? Ah, I have it! If I were to write a note to Mrs. St. John, and another to Dick Price, asking him to look out for Alice, and telling them all how I had escaped death, it would, perhaps, answer just as well as if I were to return in person."

With this idea in his mind, Tom asked Captain Trousom if it would greatly inconvenience him to run down to the vessel, which was rising rapidly out of the horizon, and permitting him to put a couple of letters on board.

"I'll do it, with pleasure, Tom," returned the skipper, evidently greatly pleased with our hero's resolution. "And so you've made up your mind to stand by me and the *Isabella*, eh?"

"Yes, sir," answered Tom.

"But I'm getting tired of idleness. Please give me something to do. Then time won't hang so heavily on my hands."

"You want to work, eh?" remarked the captain, with a smile. "Well, your wish shall be gratified. Now, run into the cabin and you'll find pen and paper there. Write your letters as quickly as you can—mention my name to Mrs. St. John—and while you're at work I'll signal the ship and run down to her. She's on a northwest course, and is inward bound, that's certain."

In less than half an hour Tom had his letters written. The one addressed to Dick Price, which he superscribed "Richard Price, Jr., Esq.," "for the fun of it," as he said to himself, was exceedingly brief. It contained a few hasty lines to break out for Alice, and adding that the story of his rescue from drowning he had written for his adopted mother's perusal, and she doubtless would permit him to read it.

To Mrs. St. John he told of the adventures which had befallen him, adding that he would remain with Captain Trousom—who claimed to be an old friend of hers—until he returned to New York with his vessel.

The ship proved to be the *Tusman*, Captain Bird, from the Cape Verd and Canary Islands, on her way to New York.

The skipper of the *Isabella* went on board of the stranger and preferred his request, which was readily acceded to. Tom handed the master of the *Tusman* late American papers, which were gladly accepted. The skippers then adjourned to the cabin, where wine of a rare quality was served.

When Captain Trousom returned to his own vessel, he had an exceedingly mellow look in his face, and his eyes were unsteady.

Upon reaching the deck he found that he had lost his sealegs, and with a solemn stare at Mr. Coffin and a hint at Nero, he hesitatingly remarked that it was very odd, and he could see that it was difficult to walk along the deck, adding, as he wildly swept his right arm through an arc of the horizon, that the master of the *Tusman* was a Bird, and that his feathers were all full-grown.

Mr. Coffin took the hint, and at the same time the left arm of his superior in his own, walked with him to the cabin, and thence to his stateroom, where he managed to get him into his berth.

"Sir, Co-coffin," whispered the skipper, with great gravity, "do have you taken an ob-observation to-to-day?—that's what I'd like to know?"

"Yes, sir."

"Wh-where are we, then, eh?"

"South of Cape Hatteras, sir. Latitude 34 deg. 48 min., and longitude 60 deg. 21 min."

"Good f-fellow, that Bird of the *Tusman*. How's she head, eh?"

"Due south, sir."

"Ve-very good; keep'r to it. Keep'r——"

The skipper had voyaged to dreamland. His arrival there was announced by a thundering snort and snore!

CHAPTER IX.

BOXING THE COMPASS.

THE wind from the north and west continued with unabated force, and the *Isabella*, with every sail bellied, leaped like a thing of life from crest to crest of the beaking waves. She was now well in the Gulf Stream, and the temperature had greatly improved. The men began to feel themselves passing into a warmer climate, and gradually they put aside the heavier garments that had been found convenient to wear on leaving port.

A day or two, at furthest, and they would be in the stormy region which lies immediately north of the Horse latitudes. This successfully passed, the *Isabella* would be in the northeast trade-winds, and fine, balmy weather for many days.

But calculations are rarely confirmed at sea any more than on land.

A time was coming when the stanchness of the *Isabella* would be thoroughly tested.

But let us not anticipate.

Meanwhile, Tom Burt endeavored to make himself useful.

He quickly learned how to "box the compass," and then boldly seizing the wheel, found he could keep the helm up and direct the brigantine's course with as steady a hand as the most experienced man on board.

Tom was proud of his new acquisition. The crew being short-handed in consequence of the desertion of one of the men at the last moment, his desire to be of use was fully appreciated. Being intelligent and apt to understand, he was allowed to reef and unreef sails, to look over the sea-charts, and occasionally, when the quartrant was not in use for practical purposes, permitted to handle it.

Captain Trousom and his mate were far from selfish in the bestowal of their maritime knowledge, and the seven of the fo'castle, with whom, on account of his straightforward, genial way, the boy was a favorite, was given many a hint as to how ropes were spliced, knots of twenty odd kinds made, and what other sea-lore they had mastered during their career as mariners.

Tom was rapidly rising in the estimation of all save Nero, who had not forgotten the indignity he had put upon him.

When the young sailor approached him, and spoke soothingly to him, the dog would turn away and slowly trot to his den, where he would stretch himself at full length, and resting his huge but handsome head on his feet, watch Tom closely, rarely taking his eyes off him, whether he was at work on deck or in the rigging.

Tom, notwithstanding the frequent rebuffs he received at the paws of Nero, persisted in being kind to him.

Now, what intelligent "animile," as the sailor would say, could long hold out against such evident friendship?"

Little by little Nero ceased to sulk.

He rarely growled when Tom advanced toward him; and finally, when he gently placed a hand on the canine's head, played with his silken ears, and then passed an arm around his neck, and said:

"Nero, we must be friends. I didn't mean to make you drunk when I gave you a share of my brandy, but only desired to warm you up, old fellow, and so keep you from catching cold."

Now, what decent dog could long retain his anger and bear such words!

It certainly wasn't Nero, big and strong as he was. He was altogether too intelligent for that, and so swallowing his resentment, he wagged his tail gently, gave a glad bark, as much as to say, "All right, old fellow; let's forgive and forget, and be friends again. But, mind you, no more brandy for me."

And henceforth our heroand the Newfoundlander were inseparable. And it was well for both, as we shall in good time see.

The *Isabella* had been a week from port, and was rapidly approaching the Bermudas.

She was in the storm circle, and already had encountered a cyclone off the coast of Florida.

The barometer had fallen rapidly, and the winds swept with terrific force over the sea, heaping it up in great, angry, mountainous waves, which it again hurled against the tiny laboring *Isabella*. And now, to add to the peril in which she was, the heavens were overcast with nimbus clouds, which seemed to pack themselves strata upon strata miles deep, until the blue waters became of a sombre, almost black color.

As the storm increased, driving the brigantine almost under bare poles—as was ascertained by the log—at a speed of thirteen and fourteen knots, no observations could be taken, and, of course, only the slightest guesses would be made as to the position in which she was.

Captain Trousom and Mr. Coffin were satisfied that the brigantine could not be brought round to the sea, and there be made to "lay-to," and so ride out the force of the gale.

There was but one course open, and that was to run her before the wind and trust to Providence.

It seemed to the master and his officer that the cyclone could not last much longer—that it must exhaust itself in a few hours, at most.

But the gale, instead of having expended its force, swept over the ocean only the fiercer. At length it blew from the north and west with such terrific power that it actually beat the contending waves down to a level and made the sea appear quite smooth.

In this, however, there was no relief for the brigantine. Her yard-arms almost touched the water, so far was she keeled over by the hurricane, and once she would ship great seas. Although her hatches were battened down, and everything made secure as possible, she still took water faster than the men could pump it out.

And, as the crew was rapidly becoming exhausted, and fearful that the vessel would become water-logged and her pumps choked, it was resolved, in order, if possible, to right her, to throw into the sea the deck-load, and then, if found necessary, cut away the main and foremasts.

The skipper was well satisfied as to the peril in which he stood, but he acted calmly, resolutely, courageously.

He loved his trim little brigantine with all a sailor's ardor, and he hated to despoil her by cutting away her masts.

But human life was more precious than cargo or ship, and so he gave the order, but not until the very last moment, to clear away everything on deck.

It was not by any means so easy to execute the task the skipper had assigned to the crew.

To bear up against the gale while standing upon a deck nearly perpendicular as a wall, and with axes cut away well-secured fastenings, and so let heavy casks roll with each lurch against the bulwarks, tearing them away, and thence plunging into the sea, required nerve, and strength, and patience.

At last the deck was cleared away at the expense of the bulwarks. The brigantine righted but little. However, there was less danger of her capsizing. Still, no one could say when the gale would abate its force, and it was thought best to complete the work of destruction by cutting away the stays and other supports of the two masts, and so letting them also go by the board.

Fortunately, the water was warm—almost tepid in temperature. Had it been cold, the men who were thus exposed for so many hours to the violence of the wind and the deluges of the seas would have sunk exhausted, and all have been lost.

And now the mariners, made fast by cords passed around their waists, and which were made secure to ring-bolts in the deck, crowded from stay to stay, and with unerring aim and vigorous blow cut them away. Then the great mass of the topgallant-mast backward and forward for a few moments, and finally, with grinding noises, which were almost like human groans, but far more intense in accent, toppled over and plunged headlong into the inkblack wastes of waters.

Night was rapidly approaching.

With darkness came added terrors.

The brigantine, thus relieved, had gotten on a more even keel. For a time it was thought best to let the lower sticks of the mast, the feet of which rested on the keel, remain untouched.

And now a noise was heard between decks which even the storm could not drown. It made the pale cheeks of the sailors paler. It was a noise that to them was as final as the sentence of death, without possible hope of pardon, passed by a judge upon a convicted murderer.

The noise—grating and harsh and sullen—portended that the cargo had shifted!

"Cut away the mast, men!" commanded the captain through his trumpet. "Be quick! Your lives are at stake!"

"Ay, ay, sir!" was the response, uttered, however, in hoarse, despairing tones, as the sailors crawled to the masts, and with repeated blows with their axes finally hacked the huge pines away.

And as these, too, tumbled into the boiling gulf, the once beautiful vessel looked forlorn indeed. She was a wreck from stem to stern of her deck.

She, however, righted, and the cargo slid back into its place, and became more securely fastened than before.

Captain Trousom drew a long breath as he felt the *Isabella* righting herself.

Calling the men to him, he said:

"This is one of the severest gales I have ever been in. We plunged into it suddenly, but we were not wholly unprepared for it. It has left us in bad plight, and I cannot say that all danger is over. We must abide events—how to Fate—but above all, trust in God. My men, I know you are tired—exhausted—and I propose giving you each a couple of biscuits and a glass of rum—mind only one glass to each to-night. I've sent the doctor for it—and here he is with the demijohn; and here, also, is Master Burt with the sack of biscuit. Help yourselves to the latter as much as you can stow away, for there'll be no supper to-night—no coffee in the morning—for caboose and stove and all else it contained are overboard, as you know. If the weather moderates by to-morrow I'll strive to reach the Florida Keys for provisions, when perhaps we may be enabled to set things to right and resume our voyage."

The doctor served the liquor to each man as he came forward, and Tom Burt, as self-possessed as if he had been cradled in cyclones, handed as many biscuits as hunger demanded.

"Now," resumed the captain, when all had been served, "we'll arrange for the night. It is pretty certain none of us will be permitted to sleep much, and while the watches below, in turn, under the direction and assistance of Mr. Coffin, will attend to the pumps, this young gentleman and myself will take our reliefs at the wheel, and so keep the poor Isabella steadily as possible out of the trough of the sea, and well up to the wind."

These words were not spoken in the ordinary voice of the skipper. It would have been impossible to have heard him amid the terrible howlings of the cyclone, had he attempted it.

He had to bring the men very near to him, and shout in their ears. Even then he was not perfectly understood by all. However, there was no grumbling.

Each went to his duty, satisfied that no mistake had been made by officers or men, since the storm swept down on them with such unexampled fury and continuance.

Tom Burt hastened to the post assigned him, and Nero would have been glad enough to be near by all the night, exposed to the whippings of the tempest, had he been permitted.

Tom said to him:

"No, Nero, you mustn't stay here. Go below, and stretch out there. If I should want you I'll call you. Go now."

The dog appeared to comprehend his words.

He rose up, and looking affectionately, it might be said almost eloquently, in his friend's eyes, turned around and disappeared into the cabin, where as yet the cyclone, either directly or indirectly, worked but little damage.

Tom stood at the wheel, occasionally relieved by the skipper, for hours—until the return of the light of day, which, dark and chilling as it was, was some relief, to the deep gloom of the long and perilous night.

But the gale gave as yet no indication of having expended its force. On the contrary, it was as violent as before; and it could be seen, by again casting the log, that the *Isabella* had been driven at a speed of at least seven or eight knots an hour through the night. And this movement was effected by the wind striking against her hull. Had her masts been standing she would have been torn to pieces.

Again the captain called the crew around him, and upon ordering the same rations to be distributed as on the preceding night, thus addressed them:

"Well, men, the storm is as heavy as ever; but I'm glad it's daylight. I was afraid we might, during the night, run afoul of some vessel laboring through the seas as we have been and are. But, so far, although we are where many ships go to and fro, we have escaped that danger. I've held to the north by west course keeping full five points off from where I assume the Bahama lie, hoping to reach the Florida coast. And I hope to find it soon. My reckoning is dead. It may be that we've passed it. If so, we're in the Gulf of Mexico. But I hope we have not reached that far yet. The storm has veered round to the north by west, and is blowing us inland. So let us pray for the best. I know you are tired out, but we must do our best. Who knows what a day may bring to us?"

The skipper spoke to encourage the crew, and he succeeded for the time.

When he had partaken of the refreshments which had been dealt to all alike, Captain Trousom went to the wheel, and on relieving Tom Burt, told him to go forward and get some food.

"Is there nothing, captain," questioned our hero, "for Nero? The poor fellow must be hungry and thirsty."

"There are only the biscuits," answered the skipper. "He'll eat them, and the doctor can serve him a pint of the water he was fortunate enough to save last night, when the deck-load was unstopped into the sea."

"All right, sir," said Tom, as he descended to the cabin and left the wheel.

The dog rose and wagged his tail, as if in recognition of his friend, but was vocally silent.

"You're hungry, old fellow," said Tom, soothingly patting the animal on the head, "and so am I, so I'll first get to your wants. It's only hard tack and water for you, Nero, since you won't touch the rum."

The dog again lay upon the floor.

Tom hastened to the doctor to procure from him water and biscuit. The latter he broke into small pieces, and steeped in the water until thoroughly soaked. He then placed them before Nero, who greedily devoured the mess and barked his thanks.

CHAPTER X.

THE DOCTOR PRAYS.

IN the midst of this fury of the elements, when even the stoutest heart on board the *Isabella* began to quail, a sense of ultimate security from a quarter quite unexpected dawned upon them.

The discovery was made by Tom Burt.

The men had ceased pumping from sheer exhaustion, and a certain sullenness had taken possession of them, to which might be added a resolute demand for strong waters, that they might die like brutes—steeped to the lips in inebriation.

This stimulant Captain Trousom resolutely refused to give them, threatening that if they persisted in it he would cause every drop of liquor on board to be poured into the sea.

"If we must die," he said, calmly and determinedly, "let us go down with the vessel as men and not as drunken hogs."

"Cap'n," said the ringleader, a surly-appearing man, "if you'd a-bin half a mariner you'd a-put the brig in stay when we first felt the storm, and rode it out. I say yer to blame, and ef we're got to go—a-founderin' to the bottom o' the sea—let us go with light hearts and stomachs full o' that ar rum you served us with this mornin'. An," he added, with a deep oath, "we'll have it! Let that nigger of a cook attempt to make 'way with drop of it and we'll cut his gizzard out of him; an' harkee! cap'n, ef you order him or anybody else to do it, we'll starve you the same."

Captain Trousom nervously put a hand in the pocket of his pea-jacket.

"Go back to the pump," he said, calmly and steadily; "go back and help lighten the ship by relieving the water."

"No, I won't, my hearty," said the man, impudently. "We're as good as dead men now, an' I propose being skipper to this yer craft as long as she floats—which I take it won't be many hours, bloomin' or no storm. Ain't that so, boys?" he added, turning to the crew, who had gathered around him.

"Go to the pumps!" thundered the captain, "all of you!"

"Go to h—ll!" returned the leader of the mutineers. "D'ye think Bill Robinson's followed the sea these twenty years to be frightened jest as the waves are a-goin' to swaller him for ever by such a lubber as your are?"

As the fellow spoke he made a spring at the captain, as if to catch him by the throat, and possibly cast him into the raging sea.

At this critical moment the flash of a pistol was seen, a sharp report heard, and the huge mutineer, with a hollow groan, fell dead at his superior officer's feet.

Captain Trousom, utterly astounded at this unexpected tragedy, looked up to see who had thus become his savior in so critical a moment.

Before him, standing between him and the crew, his head uncovered and his long, dark, curly hair streaming before the gale, was Tom Burt.

The bold hazel eyes blazed like coals of living fire.

In his right hand was a Colt's navy revolver, which he had taken from the master's stateroom.

He had overheard the leader of the conspirators while at the pump, and fearing the threats he then but half hinted at might be fully carried out, and thus every chance of saving the ship's company be lost, had resolved to arm himself and act with decision, at whatever cost to himself, when the time for doing so came, if, unfortunately, it should.

"Stand back!" said Tom, as he stood over the body of the dead mutineer, and raising the weapon he faced the men. "My life is due to Captain Trousom, and I'm ready to yield it up in his behalf. I'm but a boy, but this pistol makes me your equal in strength. The first man that raises a threatening finger against the captain, Mr. Coffin, or even the cook there, 'll die as this man has. Back, I say!"

The click of the pistol in the act of being cocked was heard, and the men, now without a leader, retreated to the fo'castle, forgetting for the time the slippery, ungrounded decks, and the howlings of the unabated hurricane, to which was now added dreadful peals of thunder and frequent and terrific flashes of lightning.

Without addressing himself immediately to Captain Trousom, Tom murmured as he held out his right hand and grasped one of Tom's, "You are my savior, boy!" he beckoned to the mate to approach, and pointing to the corpse, said:

"We had better rid ourselves of this, sir. Will you help me?"

"Certainly, my boy!" responded Mr. Coffin. "The fellow was always a-growling, and I can't exactly say that I'm sorry."

"Tell me, sir," questioned Tom, as if in doubt as to the part he had just played, "did I right? Am I responsible as—as, say murderer, for killing this poor fellow?"

"Why, no; you were justified. Your act is to be commended. Had I had a pistol I should have acted as you did. But for your conduct it is more than probable four of us would have been overboard, perhaps with our throats cut, by this time, and the mutineers would have been ransacking the ship for rum and brandy, and to their drunken orgy, the vessel inconsistently would have followed us. So you see, by cutting off the leader, may be, should the storm moderate, a dozen of lives 'll be saved."

"I'm glad to have your approval of my conduct, Mr. Coffin," said Tom, gravely. "Now, let's give this body to the sea."

Together they lifted the corpse of the mutineer, and watching their opportunity, when the laboring brigantine rose to the sea, hove it overboard.

It floated amid the battling waves but for a moment, and then it was lost to sight for ever.

Tom next approached Captain Trousom and asked:

"Sir, did I right?"

"Unquestionably, my lad," answered the skipper. "There isn't a man, or woman, or child in the world, when they come to hear of your conduct, but will say you were not only right but a hero."

"My mind's, then, at ease," said Tom. "I thought, sir," said Tom, gravely, "I was too hasty. Now, may I ask if the *Isabella*, since you managed to get out that sail, answers her helm any better?"

"She's as obedient as a child, my lad," responded the skipper, with some show of returning confidence in his vessel. "She's not making her heavy as ever—if not worse, even. But that does not worry me so much as not knowing where we are. If I could take an altitude of the sun we might find out where we were. We've been now ten days out, and for five of these we've had to rely on the log—on dead reckoning."

"May I ask, sir, where you think we are?" said Tom.

"I fear we are not far from the Florida reefs," returned the captain; "or it may be we've drifted east'ard to the Bermudas. I hope not, however. But it'd just be as bad to be off the Keys. I don't think we're to the Gulf. I hope not."

"I've good news for you, sir," said Tom.

"What's it?" demanded the captain, anxiously.

"I think the vessel has stopped leaking, sir," answered Tom. "I don't think we'll be waterlogged and so founder, whatever else may happen."

"How do you know that, youngster?" asked the skipper, with a dubious air.

"When the men dropped working at the pumps a little while ago, I noticed that the water they'd been getting out of the hold was very bligy, and much less in quantity than before. I was afraid the pumps had given out, but I tried them and found them in good working order, and with all my exertions I could not get up more than a pint'ful at a stroke."

"This is good news!" cried Captain Trousom, joyfully. "Here, youngster, take the wheel for a few minutes, while Mr. Coffin and myself go forward and test the accuracy of your experiment. I hope in God it will prove to be as you have said!"

Tom Burt again was found to be right.

But little water could be got up, and it was certain the pumps were not choked.

The leakage had, in some unknown manner, been stopped.

How, it was useless to guess.

While the skipper and his mate were at the pumps, Tom began to wonder where the doctor was.

He had not seen him during the whole of the fracas.

"Could he have gone overboard?" queried Tom. "I noticed that he looked very pale for a darkey, when I saw him an hour ago. I must see after him, especially as he is purveyor-in-chief, and I'd like to indulge my stomach with a biscuit. How this wind gives a chap an appetite! Ha! wasn't that a blinder? I never saw such lightning, and as for the thunder, it's lucky there isn't a cargo of milk on board. It'd be soured, sure fo' sart'n, as the doctor would say."

While thus commenting, a deep groan came up through the companion-way leading to the cabin and to the steward's pantry in Tom's ears, who, attending to the wheel, was standing near to the entrance.

"What's that?" said Tom, leaning his head over the steps. "Is the doctor dying? He must be seen to."

At this juncture, with a lighter step than he had assumed for days, and with a smile even on his care-worn face, the skipper approached Tom.

The leakage has, indeed, been stopped in some mysterious way, my boy, and unless it is reopened, which I pray it will not, by the straining of the hull, we may yet weather this awful gale. I never was in such a severe and prolonged tempest in all the years I've gone to and fro on the trackless deep."

"I'm glad that you've been able to confirm my experiment, sir," said Tom. "I was afraid I heard a deep groan just now in the cabin—apparently it came from the steward's pantry. May I go down and see what the matter is? Perhaps the doctor is unwell."

The skipper permitted "the shadow of a smile" to pass over his lips ere he replied:

"Certainly, my lad. Mr. Coffin, call one of the men to the wheel. I guess they're obedient now. It won't do to let them stand together in a knot much longer and concoct some other devilry."

"Yes, sir," responded the mate.

Seizing the trumpet which was hanging by the binnacle, he put it to his lips and cried:

"Here, one di you men come aft and take a trick at this wheel. You needn't touch the pumps till ordered to do so."

The men, as if moved by one impulse, began to come aft.

"One of you is enough," roared Mr. Coffin, in the midst of a heavy and prolonged roll of thunder, followed by a blinding glare of electric light. "Let Tom Gleason come here."

A young, likely seaman, who wore anything but the appearance of a mutineer in his face, at once left the group of men, and struggled with the agility of a cat to reach the captain and mate.

"Tom," said the skipper, "relieve Mr. Burt."

"Ay, ay!" responded Tom; "and please, sir, the men bid me say to you as how they're sorry for what they did. They want me to say, also, as how they didn't mean to stand by Bill Robinson, for they didn't expect he'd go further than ask you for another sup o' rum, bein' tired like, and hungry."

"It's all right now, Tom," returned the skipper, "and perhaps I'll give them a little more liquor, but not until I'm satisfied that they won't threaten me again. Now take the wheel, and keep south by west one point, if you can. She answers her helm pretty well?"

The question was addressed to the man.

"Yes, sir. Very well."

Tom Burt, relieved from the care of steering, dived straightway into the cabin.

Approaching the pantry, outside of which lay, stretched at full length, the dog Nero—the most composed and tranquil creature on board—he heard the voice of the doctor, as if in prayer.

"Oh, Lordy," Tom heard him say, "ef yo'll fo'give me dis yar time I'll be a good nig—I swar to grashus I will. I'll read de good book in de calm as well as in de storm, an' I won't drink more'n a pint o' liquor a day. I knows de rum's good wat's on bo'd dis yar sinkin' wessel, but I promise right ha'ar dat I won't take more'n my jus' sha' ob it now an' hencelo'th fo'eber—Amen. Now you, good Lord, help dis yer nigga, an' he won't steal anoder chicken fo' hese' from de coop as long as he lives!"

"Doctor," said Tom, his eyes full of mischief, "we're going."

"Is we, Mass Burt?"

The negro groaned pitifully.

"Oh, fo'gib me, Lord. An' dars dem women—Dinah and Julia—wat say dey me my wives. What'll 'come ob dem if ye let dis yar vessel go down to der bottomises deep? Oh, sabe me, an' I swar I'll be a pillar ob de church, an' I'll 'clare to gracious I will! Am de ship sinkin' to'ards, Mars Burt?" asked the doctor, in the same breath.

Tom opened the door of the pantry before replying, and found the doctor on his bended knees, the Bible open before him and a glass of rum in one of his hands.

"Why, doctor," said Tom, "I was afraid you had fallen overboard. Where were you when we had the row on deck? Did you hear the pistol?"

"I heard suffin', Mars Burt," answered the doctor, "an' I tought I'd jes' come down heah, whar I'd be out ob de way, an' speak to de Lord 'bout de situation ob tings, an' see ef I couldn't get Him to help us out ob de yar trouble we're in."

"And what are you doing with the rum, doctor?" demanded Tom.

"Dat am to help me in my spiritual devotions, sah. Is we sinkin', sah?"

"I guess not," replied Tom.

"Den de good Lord has heerd an' granted de petition of dis yere niggah."

Saying which the doctor poured the rum down his throat.

CHAPTER XI.

ALONE ON THE SEA.

THE gallant *Isabella*, which had combated the prolonged tempest so persistently, was at last destined to sink beneath the waves.

Wind nor sea could destroy her.

These, though despoiled, could not conquer her, and so the Fates, now combined, brought fire to their aid.

While yet Tom Burt was detailing to the frightened, half-inebriated and prayerful negro the suppression of the mutiny and the death of Bill Robinson, the head and front of the offending, a peal of thunder, longer and louder and more terrific than any which had preceded, seemed to break immediately over the vessel.

For a moment the reverberation was so deafening that Tom was necessitated to cease his speech. The noise was not unlike the concentrated and simultaneous report of a thousand pieces of heavy ordnance fired from an elevation within a short distance of the struggling bark.

Before Tom could resume his discourse, loud, crackling detonations were heard. These noises were not unlike the explosions of Chinese fire-crackers, and then came a sheet of blinding light, and the *Isabella* reeled, and shivered in every timber of her framework.

"Lord a massy!" groaned the doctor, as he fell upon his knees, his lower jaw dropping and his eyes becoming fixed, as if fascinated by some dreadful vision.

It was enough to make even the stoutest quail, and it is no disparagement to our young friend's courage to say that he felt as if his heart had leaped into his mouth.

"That was a fearful crash, doctor," said Tom.

"I'm afraid the bolt has struck us."

"Oh, Lord!" groaned the negro, still on his knees.

Tremblingly he again put the fiery and stimulating liquor to his lips, swallowing the draught at a gulp.

"Forgive dis niggah, good Lord, dis yer time, an' if yo'll let him put him foot on de dry lan' once mo', you kin jes' bet yo'r pile he'll niver tempt de sea agin'; dat is, if dem women, Dinah an' Julia, 'll luff him be."

"I smell something burning," said Tom, suddenly turning his face toward the cabin. "What new evil is this that has come to the doomed vessel?"

He heard the quick movements of many feet on the deck, then hurried, but earnest, words spoken, and orders given.

The wind had ceased blowing.

The hurricane was evidently at an end.

The storm had terminated as quickly as it had commenced.

Occasionally a fierce gust would sweep down upon the vessel. But, evidently, a calm was coming; and with it, however, a visitor undesirable to a vessel exposed and helpless as was the wrecked *Isabella*—one of those tropical rain-storms which are of themselves seemingly enough to sink the stoutest ship.

These rain-falls are often so heavy that it is not always possible to distinguish the features of a friend who is standing but ten or twelve feet from you.

It was not this, however, that had caused the excitement noticed by the boy.

Something more dreadful had come upon them.

They had now an enemy to combat that was too often beyond human mastery; especially so at sea, where means are rarely sufficiently adequate to successfully attack it.

The ship was on fire!

The thunderbolt, the last that had come out of the black, impending clouds, had struck the stump of the mainmast and shivering it into a thousand atoms, had run down it to the keelson, and thence passing along the flooring of the lower deck, had set on fire combustible goods that were stowed there, forming part of the cargo; and thence, by some means, it had ripped off two of the planks near the water-line, making a great opening, and thus it had again passed into the air.

The sea had gone down very much within a short time.

The cessation of the tornado and the heavy fall of the rain had been the chief means of restoring the beaten and heaped-up waves to something of their normal calmness, and, therefore, the rent made by the lightning did not appear to be of so great moment as that of the fire.

When the brigantine rolled, as she yet was doing, but not so violently as during the more intense period of the storm, she shipped considerable water, and so extinguished the flames that had been eating into the lower part of the hull. But the air, which also passed through this opening, served to feed the fire; and so, immediately under the main-deck, the awful work of destruction was going on, silently and rapidly.

The *Isabella* was about to bring to an abrupt close her last voyage.

Captain Trousom felt that, in the final destruction of the *Isabella*, he was about to lose an object dear to him as a living friend.

He had walked her deck for years, and she had borne him safely through many storms, none, however, so fierce or continuous as the one she had just passed through; and then to be forced to abandon her at last by an agent which no precaution, no foresight, no seamanship, could avoid, cut him to the quick.

He was not, even in this moment of sadness—when nearly all he was master of, after years of exposure and toil, was about to go into the absorbing sea—neglectful of his duty to those who were intrusted to his charge.

"Mr. Coffin," he said, hoarsely, "we must take to the boats. Fortunately, they are uninjured. And I think now that the tempest has ceased, they will live in this sea. Surely we cannot be far from land."

"I'm afraid, sir," said the mate, "that we are well within the Gulf of Mexico. We have made more southings than you have supposed. Our course has been by west, you know, sir. Now, according to your reckoning, we ought to have been somewhere on the Florida peninsula long ago. But, as we are not, we must be around its most southern point, and in the Gulf. There were times, sir, when the hurricane swept the seas at the rate of sixty to seventy knots an hour."

"Are you well armed, Mr. Coffin?" demanded the skipper.

"Since the mutiny I've carried a couple of seven-barreled shooters on my person," was the answer.

"That is right," resumed the captain; "I also am prepared for any emergency. The youngster, Burt, may be relied on as being faithful and courageous to the death, even. The cook will fight, but he must be driven into a corner first. He is loyal to the core. We must divide our forces and take command of the boats. Have them provided with water and biscuit. Put a compass in each, also oars and sails. And don't forget to put charts, spyglasses, quadrants, and the chronometer in the ship's boat, which I will command. You will take charge of the small boat. There are ten of us. The large boat is good for eight, the small one will hold two comfortably, and Nero. They are, fortunately, what are called air-boats. There is little danger of their sinking. With water and biscuit we'll be all right. For those who may become exhausted, if we should fail to make the land before to-morrow morning, it may be well to have in each boat a bottle or small demijohn of brandy. You'll find the liquor in my berth-room, in the medicine-chest."

"Yes, sir; I'll attend to your orders."

And the mate hurried to where the boats were stowed, to see to their removal.

The skipper then called the crew aft.

"Listen, men," he commenced. "I want every man of you to be obedient, and to obey strictly, without question or hesitation every order that may be issued by myself or Mr. Coffin. D'ye hear? The ship's on fire! But for that there'd be no necessity of our leaving her. She is eating herself up between decks. The flames may burst out at any moment. In order to get away safely and reach land, which, according to my reckoning, cannot be very far to the westward of here, I shall insist on obedience to every command; and," he added, significantly, "I have the means of compelling it. Any one of you who becomes at all unruly, I shall send after your messmate, Bill Robinson, and that simply that the rest of you may be saved from destruction."

Tom Burt here stepped out of the cabin and stood near the captain.

"Youngster," said the skipper, "I have assigned you to the gig with Mr. Coffin. The others will go with me in the long-boat."

"Yes, sir," responded our hero.

Then, with a little hesitation in his manner, he added:

"Captain, may I prefer a request?"

"What is it?" demanded the skipper.

"The doctor is helpless. His soul appears to be frightened out of him, and he has been begging me to ask you to let him go with me and Nero. He says he will stow himself into the smallest compass, if you will grant him his request."

The captain thought a moment, and then said:

"I'll see."

A quarter of an hour later, everything that was thought needful for the new adventure had been stowed away in the boats; and these were now afloat with their square sails hanging to the stepped masts, and ready to be spread to the now quite moderate breeze.

The sea was yet rough, but the deluge of rain was beating it down rapidly.

The boats being open, they, of course, received a great deal of the water, but this was not considered a particular inconvenience. It could be bailed out.

Mr. Coffin, with the doctor and Nero, who lapped up the rain-water eagerly, seated themselves in the gig, near Tom Burt.

Captain Trousom and the six foremast men were in the ship's boat, and now all awaited the word to cast loose.

"Are you all ready, men?" cried Captain Trousom, huskily, and his eyes quite dim.

"Ay, ay, sir," was the response, as the men seized the oars in order to pull the boats away from the lee side of the doomed brigantine, ere they spread their sails.

"Have any of you forgotten anything?" again spoke the skipper. "If so, jump aboard the *Isabella* and fetch it. Her decks are hot, though, and you'll have to step lively if you go."

There being no wish expressed to get anything from the vessel, the order was given to let go and pull out about a hundred fathoms.

It was now quite dark, and the rain had not in the least abated its volume.

The men had scarcely ceased rowing when a column of fire shot suddenly up from the deck of the *Isabella*.

A moment later and a heavy, dull noise was heard.

"Ah!" murmured the skipper, in a sad voice, "the flames have reached the magazine."

The dull, overhanging clouds were now brilliantly illuminated for a few moments; and the men received the impression that they were in the centre of a vast vault, or cave, the roof of which could almost be touched by stretching out their hands. Indeed, for a brief time, so real was this feeling that not a few of them involuntarily crouched as if they were fearful of being struck by the seemingly jagged edges of impending rocks!

Almost as suddenly as the sheets of flame were shot out of the *Isabella* they became extinguished.

She was seen to reel to and fro for a minute, as if she were being rocked on the up-heaving, lava-like waves of a submerged volcano. This peculiar motion was accompanied by another dull, prolonged sound, and there fell upon the ears of the men a sharp and angry hiss as the waters attacked the fire; then the brigantine lifted herself out of the black side, and ere one could count ten she fell back on her stern, and the sea for ever closed upon her!

It was now pitch dark, save that in each boat was a lighted lamp. These were placed near the compasses, in order that the courses to be determined on might be closely followed.

"Now, men," said Captain Trousom, "as you've all been obedient to my commands, and as you are all wet to the skin, I have determined upon giving each of you a mouthful of brandy. After that we shall hoist sail and make for shore."

Each man was served with a gill of brandy, and on the demijohn from which it was taken being returned to the locker, the skipper cried:

"Now, hoist sail!"

The order was instantly obeyed.

A man was then detailed to steer, and the others informed that they might cover themselves with the oilcloths that had been put on board, and sleep if they could, till the relief for the helmsman should be cried.

The captain then called, through his trumpet, to Mr. Coffin to keep close as possible in his wake, and to be sure and have the nose of the gig due west.

"Ay, ay, sir," was the mate's answer.

There was silence after this in the ship's boat, where the exhausted seamen soon fell into a heavy and dreamless slumber.

The skipper never for a moment lost sight of his charge.

He sat bolt upright and immovable at the stern, his eyes upon the compass, watching its course.

Once, when the steersman, exhausted like his shipmates, closed his eyes in sleep, the boat veered a point or two, the deep voice of his superior rang out shrill and clear:

"Keep her up, sir. Westward—due west!"

The gig was not less ably managed.

Tom Burt proposed to take the helm for the first trick.

"I am not so tired as you are, Mr. Coffin," he said. "I can keep awake for a couple of hours comfortably, and at the end of that time, I'll call up the doctor—see, he's already asleep, as is Nero."

Mr. Coffin, whose health was far from robust—indeed, he had taken the voyage wholly on that account—gladly yielded the rudder to the boy, and presently was lying as unconscious of the sad experiences of the last few days as the cook, or his friend, the dog Nero.

Tom Burt could not sleep, even if he had had the opportunity.

His mind was busy with the events of the past two weeks, and in speculating upon the condition of those he hoped were yet happy and comfortable in that far-away city—Brooklyn.

"How strange! How like a dream all this is!" he muttered. "And yet I like the dangers, the pleasures and the excitements of the sea. But, after all, I prefer the land. Still, I do not regret what has happened. It is an experience in one's life. I am so much the richer in knowledge by it."

And in this way, unobservant of the hours, but with his boat's head pointed undeviatingly to the west, he continued at his post.

When the dull, gray day returned, he looked around his narrow horizon for his consort. He found himself alone, with his still slumbering companions, upon the illimitable sea.

(To be continued.)

"Floating to Fortune" commenced in No. 441.

A TREE GROWING IN A COURT-HOUSE TOWER.—SILVER MAPLE-TREE GROWING FROM THE TOWER OF THE GREENSBURG COURT-HOUSE.

A TREE GROWING IN A COURT-HOUSE TOWER.

A CURIOUS and interesting fact is reported from Greensburg, Indiana. The tower of the court-house at that place is one hundred and forty feet in height. One hundred and five feet from the ground is the water-sheet of the tower, and above that it is covered with dressed stone, made to fit closely, in slabs two by five feet, inclining at an

TALES WITH BOYS ABOUT FOREIGN LANDS.—ENGLAND'S NEW BATTLE-GROUND IN SOUTH AFRICA.—EARLY MORNING MARKET, PORT ELIZABETH, ALGOA BAY, CAPE COLONY.—SEE PAGE 110.

TALES WITH BOYS ABOUT FOREIGN LANDS.—ENGLAND'S NEW BATTLE-GROUND IN SOUTH AFRICA.—LEAVING CAPE TOWN FOR THE DIAMOND FIELDS.

aegle of about 30 degrees from upright. From a crevice about the water-sheet, one hundred and ten feet from the ground, a small twig sprouted one scene eight years ago, and continued to grow until, in the third Summer, it put forth leaves, and was decided to be a silver-maple, sprung, no doubt, from a seed carried by a bird or whirlwind, and lodged in that exalted place. By the time the tree had become famous. Accounts of it had appeared in the papers; but the story was not generally believed. But, nevertheless, the tree lived and grew. It is now more than twelve feet high, and is thought to be three inches in diameter. The top is quite bushy, and in the Summer season the leaves are numerous and luxuriant. It can be seen for many miles around, and the stranger approaching first sees the tower, and then this phenomenon. The rapid growth of the tree is forcing the stones apart. This is readily seen with a glass, and the ambitious maple must soon be brought down, or damage to the building must ensue.

A WOLF HUNT.

I HAD been attending an Eastern college for about two years, when I took a short Christmas holiday of three weeks.

During this short vacation I promised a cousin of mine, living in Missouri, that I would pay him a visit. Like me, he was a young man, only eighteen years of age, but contented himself on his father's farm instead of seeking a collegiate education, as I was doing.

He lived in one of the fertile western counties of the State—a gay country gentleman, fond of horses, dogs and guns, and as I also delighted in field-sports I eagerly accepted his invitation.

"Hurrah, Fred, for a wolf-hunt!" he boisterously shouted, one morning, bursting into my room, his ruddy face all aglow with eager anxiety for the coming sport.

"A wolf-hunt, George?" said I, getting out of my bed, for I had not yet arisen.

"Yes, a wolf-hunt. A regular old chase with horns and hounds, horses and guns. What do you say to it?"

"I am in for it, to be sure," I replied, beginning to dress. I had only been at George's three days, and he had promised me rare sport before I should leave.

"Dick Timmer has seen a wolf-track not two miles from here, and there is a lovely snow for the business, so I am going to put the dogs on it as soon as we have had breakfast."

My dressing was considerably accelerated by this startling intelligence, and we hurried down to breakfast.

George's two brother's, Dave and Tom, were already there, and as soon as we finished our morning meal we repaired to the barn to select our horses.

A WOLF HUNT.—"I HEARD A FALL BEHIND, AND LOOKING BACK, SAW A HORSE AND RIDER THAT WAS IN MY REAR DOWN AMID A SHOWER OF SNOW. BUT THERE WAS NO TIME TO BE LOST. THE WOLF WAS NEARING A CONSIDERABLE BODY OF TIMBER."

My relative had a good supply of these valuable animals, being extensively engaged in the horse-raising business.

The one I chose was a beautiful black, whose long, clean limbs and beautiful chest seemed to indicate speed and endurance. Saddles were put on them, and then commenced the melodious windings of horns and the answering howls of hounds. Half a dozen other young men in the neighborhood came up and joined us in the sport.

We were prepared with shot-guns, rifles and revolvers, which were not to be used unless the animal should come to bay, and prove dangerous to the dogs.

The morning air was sharp, clear and frosty; yet, with our comfortable coats and furs, we felt not the keen teeth of Jack Frost.

We started off, leaving showery trails of snow in our rear as we sped along the road. We had not proceeded more than two miles when George, who was leader of the party, called a halt.

"Right here, boys, is where the trail was seen, so look sharp now and watch old Maida; he'll strike it soon."

A shrill blast was then blown from his horn, which recalled the wandering dogs with yelps and howls.

Our horses, eager as ourselves for the sport, stamped impatiently in the snow, and we were compelled to keep a tight rein to prevent them dashing away.

"Hist, Maida, Tige!" shouted George, and the two hounds commenced sniffing about. Soon I saw the old dog called Maida put his nose to the ground, then raise his head, utter a prolonged yelp, and bound away.

"He struck it, he's on it!" we all cried, and away we went, helter-skelter, huntsmen and dogs, with yelps, howls, shouts and blasts of horns, making the morning air resound with hunter's melody. No one who never enjoyed the excitement of the chase can imagine the real pleasure in it.

"With whoop and shout and wild halloo," we almost flew over the snow-covered ground. The country was prairie, with occasional strips of timber and brush.

A WOLF HUNT.—"THE GAME WAS NOW IN SIGHT, AND THE CHASE BECAME ONE IN EARNEST."

We formed one extended train of horsemen and dogs. George, who was mounted on a splendid bay, swift, sure and experienced in the chase, was in the lead of the horsemen. The trail was evidently very fresh, for the dogs scarcely stopped once to scent it, but kept steadily on.

After about two miles' ride we came to a strip of timber, which lined the banks of a small creek. There was dense underbrush along the timber on which the snow had lodged, so as to completely conceal whatever might be underneath. Into one of these the foremost dog plunged, and instantly a huge wolf sprang out on the other side. It would be impossible to describe the wild shouts of boys and howls of dogs that ensued.

The game was now in sight, and the chase became one in earnest. The wolf had evidently taken temporary refuge under the shelter of this tent of brush and snow, but had been tracked by the faithful Maida to his retreat.

"Come on, boys! Now for him!" yelled George, and his horse put forth his best speed.

My steed was only second from him as we plunged through the woods across the creek, and reached a level prairie on the other side. The chase became more exciting than ever, and seemed to be relished by all, unless it was the wolf.

I don't believe I ever saw horses do better running. We were not more than two hundred yards behind the wolf, and the dogs were still nearer. We flew over a prairie of about five miles in an incredibly short space of time.

"Shoot the wolf!" I cried.

"No!" shouted George; "he will either strike his den up here on Lost Creek or commence a circuit."

I heard a fall behind, and looking back, saw a horse and rider that was in my rear down amid a shower of snow. But there was no time to be lost. The wolf was nearing a considerable body of timber, and true to George's predictions, made for a steep, rocky bank, where there was a hole, into which he disappeared.

The dogs were gathered about it long before we were, and though none seemed bold enough to follow, made the air ring with their yelps.

"What will we do now?" I asked, as we gathered about the den.

"Smoke him out," said George, dismounting, and hitching his horse to the sapling near by.

Our companion who had got the fall now came up. He had suffered no injuries, save a few slight bruises. We all dismounted, and fastening our horses, commenced gathering twigs and dry brush to pile in front of the den. Soon we had a large pile at the opening.

George lighted it, and said:

"Now, form a line here, and shoot him as soon as he comes out."

With cocked guns we waited, as the fire burned up furiously. A puff of wind sent the flame and blinding smoke directly into the hole, and instantly a scrambling noise was heard, and the burning sticks pushed away.

"Here he comes. Fire!" yelled George.

"Crack, crack! Bang, bang!" rang out a volley, and when the smoke cleared away a dead wolf and two wounded dogs lay by the opening.

We skinned the wolf. One of the dogs died, the other got well, and thus terminated my first wolf-hunt.

TRUE STORIES ABOUT THE INDIANS.

No. VIII.

SIMON KENTON'S CAPTIVITY.

[Continued.]

NEXT day Kenton was carried off toward the place appointed for his burning. On the way he passed through two towns of the tribe, at each of which he had again to run the gauntlet, and underwent a severe whipping.

At the second of these towns he made a bold effort to escape. Not thinking him in a state for such an undertaking, the Indians had not tied him up as before, and kept a careless guard. He watched his opportunity to dash off, and, hurt as he was, was able to distance his pursuers. What must have been his feelings at once more finding himself free!

But, alas, he had only got two miles from the town, when he accidentally ran across a party of Indians on horseback. They pursued and easily recaptured him, for this was the open region of the Sandusky Plains, where the dense forests which covered the other side of the Ohio began to give pace to the prairies of the West. Now, as he was being driven back to the town, he gave himself up to sullen despair. Fate was against him, and there was nothing for it but to die.

Very different were the feelings of the Indians as they trooped out to give harsh welcome to the re-captured prisoner. Amid the general rejoicing he was bound and handed over to the frolicksome youth of the tribe, who amused themselves by tumbling him into a creek and rolling him in the mud till he was nearly suffocated. It would have been a mercy to drown him outright, but this they had no intention of doing, and moved on to the place where he was to suffer a more dreadful death.

Here he was painted black, the usual token of his doom, and the Indians flocked to look upon him, with as much interest as if he had been a strange monster. Among the rest came Simon Girty, formerly a companion of his own in border exploits, now a renegade, almost naturalized among the Indians, and playing a disgracefully prominent part in their attacks on his own people. In frontier history this notorious character is branded with the most hateful charges of crime and cruelty; but for once there is some good to be told of him.

Not recognizing Kenton, disfigured as he was by paint and marks of ill-usage, Girty asked him where he came from. The name of Kentucky moved no cord in the traitor's breast. He inquired how many men the Americans had there. Kenton cunningly told him the number of officers to mislead him as to their real force; for it seems that even in these early days there was some reason for the joke about our boasting more captains and colonels than there were privates to give command over. Then he was asked his name, and when he replied "Simon Butler," the renegade started. Now he remembered his old comrade, and showed sorrow to find him in such woeful case. He is declared to have embraced him with tears, promising to leave nothing untried to save his life.

Accordingly he had another council called, and made a long speech to the Indians in their own language, pleading for his friend, who was delighted to see his words received with evident approbation. When Colonel Crawford was about to be burned, Girty either could not, or, as is more likely, would not save him; but now his influence or his eloquence prevailed with his savage associates. Kenton was set free, after going so near death with so little hope of a respite.

Girty's kindness did not end here. He fitted out his friend with a suit of clothes and a horse, and took him about among the Indians till he began to feel quite at home. Kenton soon recovered from his injuries, and did not bear much malice toward his late persecutors. Seeing that he looked on himself as outlawed for ever from his own people, it is possible that he might even have followed Girty's example in casting in his lot with the Indians for the rest of his life, in which case he could not but have degenerated into a treacherous scoundrel of the same type. But there was another turn, and yet another, for him in the wheel of fortune.

When he had been for some time among the Indians, Kenton and Girty were summoned to a council. To his dismay, the former observed that while the warriors gave Girty their hand they refused to take his, and received him with looks that boded no good.

A chief rose and made an excited speech, of which he was too evidently the subject. Then the truth came out. A party of the tribe had just been defeated with loss by the whites. According to their barbarous code of honor, it was necessary to take revenge, and Kenton was the only victim in their hands. Once more he was on his trial for life.

It was in vain that Girty now did his best to appease the scowling crowd, reminded them of the services he had done to their cause, and begged that his friend's life might be spared for his sake, and he would never again interpose in favor of an American. By a large majority Kenton was once more condemned to die, and his old friend was obliged to tell him that this time there was no remedy. Again he found himself a most forlorn prisoner, with life not worth many hours' purchase.

Yet Girty was not at the end of his devices. He put it into the heads of the Indians to take their captive to Upper Sandusky, thus securing a delay at least in his execution. This place was, during the revolutionary war, the rendezvous of the tribes acting in the British interest. A great gathering of Indians was about to be held there, to receive the presents of clothes, arms, trinkets, and so forth, with which they were kept in pay; and it was easy to persuade his judges that Kenton could be burnt with more *éclat* at this assemblage. So to Sandusky he was sent under a guard. By this time his feelings must have become somewhat blunted by all these strange and varied chances. For weeks "fortune had been playing at cat and mouse with him;" and if he had learned that his life was never safe for a day, he had also reason never to give up hope. It is said in one account of his life that he ran the gauntlet eight times, was three times bound to the stake to be burned, and came before four councils to decide on his death.

On his way he now met the celebrated chief, Logan, illustrious no less for his magnanimity than for his prowess. It was not Logan's nature to delight in cruelty. He shook hands with the prisoner, and, without promising anything, undertook to do what he could for him. He at once sent off a messenger on a merciful errand. So when Kenton reached Sandusky he was not made to run the gauntlet, a reassuring sign.

For a fourth time a council was held to pronounce upon his case. Here an unexpected advocate, engaged by Logan's good offices, appeared to speak for him. This was Captain Peter Drewyer, a French Canadian by birth, and one of the principal Indian agents and interpreters in the British service, a post which made him a man of importance among the allied tribes. He began his speech by flattering the passions of his audience, declaring that not a single American ought to be left alive. But, he said—and his hearers were sure to agree with him—war must be carried on by means of cunning as well as courage. Now, it was most desirable that this prisoner should be examined by the British general at Detroit, who might get from him important information about the enemy. Afterward he might be brought back, and put to death in any way they pleased.

This argument seemed highly reasonable, and the Indians were entirely convinced when Drewyer offered them a hundred dollars' worth of rum and tobacco for leave to take Kenton to Detroit. Having gone so far in the bargain, they were then persuaded, for an additional ransom, to give up all claims on his life. The savages loved rum even better than revenge.

Having been taken in a canoe to the British garrison at Detroit, Kenton found himself treated like a regular prisoner of war, a situation which must have seemed quite luxurious to him after his recent experiences, though our soldiers were not always disposed to be over-kindly to their fellow-countrymen of the Colonies, who were then making such a bold fight for their liberties. He was even allowed to go about freely, obliged only to report himself every morning to an officer, and warned not to leave the town, lest he should again fall into the hands of the Indians. Rations and clothes were given him, and he made friends not only among his fellow-prisoners, but among the inhabitants of the place, some of whom had more sympathy for his case than they cared openly to avow. But nothing could keep his heart from turning ever toward home. As soon as his strength and spirits were restored he began to think of once more braving all the perils of hundreds of miles of prairie and forest, swarming though they might be with cruel enemies, from whose hands he would not get lightly off if once more made prisoner.

Along with two Kentuckians he formed a plan to escape. As it was a woman who had driven him from home, so now it was a woman who aided him to return. The wife of an Indian trader took pity on the captives, and did what she could to provide them with means for their flight.

From time to time they were able to hide away

A WOLF HUNT.—"'HERE HE COMES. FIRE!' YELLED GEORGE. CRACK, CRACK! BANG, BANG! RANG OUT A VOLLEY, AND WHEN THE SMOKE CLEARED AWAY, A DEAD WOLF LAY BEFORE US."

a little store of food and ammunition in a hollow tree. But it would be madness to start on such a journey without guns, and guns are not to be had by prisoners for the asking. These at length their lady friend procured from some drunken Indians, and placed them in a patch of peas in her garden. Fetching them by night, the three bold fugitives started off. A Scotch trader, as cautious as he was shrewd, had dropped a hint to Kenton, which was not thrown away. "*If*," said he, "any one should happen to want to go to Kentucky, he ought to strike out to the west, and take a circuitous route, so as to avoid the usual warpaths of the Indians." They now took this advice, traveling only by night, and steering their course by the stars.

They suffered greatly from hunger and fatigue. It was not always safe to use their rifles, even when game was to be had. At one point they had almost run right into the encampment of a party of Indians. His companions, losing heart, were for going forward and surrendering themselves, but Kenton had already had enough of the tender mercies of the Indians; so they made off with all precaution, yet were so hard put to by hunger, that when a fine buck appeared on their path, they could not resist the temptation of killing and cooking it, Indians or no Indians in sight of their tell-tale fire.

But they pursued their journey without interruption, and, after a month's weary marching, arrived safely at the falls of the Ohio. Now, secure among friends, after so many sufferings and dangers, what would you expect such a man as Kenton to do? He set off, almost immediately, to court the same risks in another expedition into the Indian Country.

He was still to take part in many such expeditions, and to acquire fresh fame on the frontier, not only in this war, but in that of 1812. Though he could neither read nor write, schools having been less plentiful in the backwoods than in the neighborhood where he was brought up, he was made general of militia. In time he also became an earnest member of the Methodist Church, in the peaceful evening of his life settling down into the character of a more respectable citizen than might have been expected from his stormy youth. He lived to be more than eighty years of age, and when he was no longer able to hunt, the stout old Indian-fighter's last days were made comfortable by a pension of twenty dollars a month.

(To be continued.)

INVENTIVE BEN;

OR,

How a Boy Became a Jack-of-all-Trades and Master, Too.

BY COMMODORE AH-LOOK.

CHAPTER XXVII.

TAKING AND GIVING "TOMATER-SASS."

TO have caused the death of a fellow-being, whether done accidentally or in self-defense, is a terrible thing, and as Ben slowly followed the policeman into the bakery, he felt sorry that he had ever given way to his inventive faculties.

Like many country officers, the two officers were conceited, ignorant and pig-headed, and, instead of at once proceeding down to the cellar, the elder of the men began a sort of court of inquiry, the replies to which indicated that Thatcher had not only fixed the death-trap, but had expressed satisfaction in its working, while Plummer, who was equally guilty with the lad, made no attempt to share the responsibility.

It annoyed Ben to discover such smallness of soul on the part of his betters, and the baker, however, he did not say anything to them or attempt to deny his share in the matter.

"My name is Sergeant Tubbs," said the senior policeman, exhibiting his shield. "Which of you men," turning to Jim Crupper and John Murphy, "will stand guard over this prisoner?"

"I will, if you handcuff him," timidly remarked the first-mentioned workman. "I remember the way he served them tramps, and ain't going to tackle him alone."

"Come here, boy, and have the bracelets on," said the officer, producing the irons from his pocket. "None of your nonsense with me."

Retreating to the far end of the bakery, the indignant lad picked up an oaken club, used in washing potatoes, and bravely defended himself until overpowered and secured by the policemen, who, throwing him heavily upon a heap of sacks, left him half mad with rage and proceeded to trim their lamps.

"Crupper," observed the sergeant, as Ben made a desperate attempt to free himself, "you take my staff and stand over that young ruffian, while we search for the body of his victim."

Jim received the bludgeon with a grin, and taking up his position near the boy, said, with ill-concealed delight:

"See here, Mister Inventor, if you don't lie still, I'll give you something hot."

As the explorers were descending the cellar stairs, Thatcher screwed up his face in an effort to sneeze, noticing which Crupper was down upon him like a flash, and thrusting the butt end of the staff under his nose, most effectually stopped his "ah-tishoo."

"Confound it, can't I even sneeze?" growled the unfortunate prisoner, whose face once more resumed its pucker.

Again was the staff mercilessly jammed into position, and for the second time poor Ben almost strangled, while Tubbs, pausing at the foot of the stairs, growled:

"Jim, if he ain't still club his ear off!"

Leaving our young friend guarded by the catlike, watchful Crupper, and unable even to make the slightest motion, we will follow Plummer, Murphy, and the officers.

"It's cool down here, ain't it?" remarked the baker, in a low tone, as they picked their way among the pork-casks and empty barrels with which the place was piled, saying which he indicated a turning to the right, and whispered, "Sergeant, he is around that corner. I'm afraid to go any further."

"The way I" said the valiant Tubbs, motioning to the other officer.

Instead of replying, his assistant backed on to Plummer, who, in turn, stepped upon Murphy's toes, and the latter exclaimed:

"See here, let us wait till daylight. I'm always afraid to look upon a corpse."

For some moments there was a comical pause, but after a while the sergeant gathered courage, and said, in a loud, quavering voice:

"Are you dead?"

As no reply came from the death-trap, which was screened from their view by a pile of empty barrels, the scared official repeated the question, then, shaking as badly as a boy who advances to receive a whipping, seized his subordinate's truncheon, raised his lantern above his head, and slowly advanced.

In another instant he was round the corner, after which the listeners prepared for the worst, their hearts beating as fast as dollar clocks.

"Haw, haw, haw!" roared the sergeant, as he viewed the victim of Ben's invention; "come here, you fellows."

"What is it?" they boldly chorused, moving like stage heroes, all in a body. "What are you laughing at?"

In the next instant they were enlightened as to the cause of his merriment, and sent up such frantic shouts that Thatcher, hail rising, exclaimed:

"See here, Jim; there's some sell in this little job. Let me go."

"Lie down!" fiercely commanded Crupper, inserting his fingers between Ben's neck and shirt-collar, and bending his knuckles so as almost to choke the lad. "Lie down, or I'll give you tomater-sass!"

"I'm blessed if you will," savagely gurgled Thatcher. "You le'me go."

"Not by a big lick," was the cur's rejoinder, as he thrust him back, and once more pushed the staff under his nose. "You joss dry up, murderer."

Crupper talked Ben on account of the latter helping so quickly learned the business, and was glad enough of the chance to vent his spite upon him, never for a moment imagining how quickly the tables would be turned upon himself.

The policemen scrambled the convulsed policemen, followed by Plummer and his men, and in a short time the boy was free, noticing which Jim quietly deposited the truncheon on a flour-barrel and resumed work, while Ben hotly demanded:

"What sort of a joke do you call this? Who have I killed?"

"Haw, haw, haw!" bellowed the stalwart officers, breaking out anew at his speech.

"Ho, ho, ho!" yelled Plummer.

"He, he, he!" sniggered the workman, John, joining Crupper, and proceeding to mold up the bread.

"It may be blamed funny to you," cried Thatcher, "but somebody's got to pay for insulting me in this style."

Taking a lantern he descended the stairs, and was soon close to the fatal spot, where he beheld an aged donkey, extended upon its back, dead as the proverbial door-nail.

Giving it a contemptuous kick, he retraced his steps, and, on arriving among the grinning party, remarked:

"I've heard say that when a jackass dies his brothers set up a laugh, though, until now, I have never proved it."

"Do you mean to—he he!—say that I am a—haw haw!—donkey?" inquired the convulsed sergeant.

"I do," dryly responded Ben. "If you don't like what I say, you can do the other thing, Mr. Heehaw!"

The cops stopped laughing and scowled at the lad, but finding it did not make any impression upon him, presently rose, nodded to the baker, and, summoning his man, quitted the premises.

"Now you turn to work again," said Plummer to the young inventor.

"Not much," quietly answered the boy. "I do no more work here. I want my money, and mean to have it right away!"

"You do, eh?" said the boss, smiling incredulously. "I want to know."

"Yes," coolly returned Ben, playing with the oaken masher. "Pony up."

Plummer glanced nervously at him, then, going into the store and unlocking the till, paid up like a man, evidently being afraid of his employé.

Rolling up the bills tightly, Thatcher placed them in his pocket and climbed to the attic, where he packed his carpet-bag.

As he descended the stairs the boss called to him, saying:

"Going before breakfast, my son?"

"Yes," was the response, and soon the lad was in the bakery, where Crupper and Murphy were working like machines.

Depositing his baggage on a barrel, Ben seated himself and began to polish the end of his knobstick, at the same time watching for the last batch of bread to be placed in the oven.

It was almost morning ere this was accomplished, still he sat and regarded them.

When Murphy closed the oven-door, Jim proceeded to make some coffee; noticing which, Thatcher rose, and advancing upon him, said:

"Look here, mister; I'm going to give you some tomater sass."

In a few seconds Crupper and he were waltzing round the bakery in a very lively fashion, while John, fearing that his turn would come next, discreetly vanished.

Round and round darted assailant and assailed, the dust from the latter's clothes raising quite a cloud in the place. However, spite of this, Ben kept steadily on until he had given the coward what he deserved. Then, shouldering his traps, quitted the place, murmuring:

"Baking isn't no business for me, after all."

The morning was beginning to dawn, and wagons, laden with garden truck, were moving along the other side deserted streets.

"Let me see," he mused; "where shall I go next? It will never do to return to Scrub Oak. I'll go back successful or stay away for ever."

As he was thus thinking over his prospects, he turned a corner and came upon a tin peddler's wagon, the owner of which was evidently suffering pain.

"What is the matter?" inquired the boy.

"I'm sick," moaned the peddler. "It is twelve miles to my home in East Wakefield; if you will drive me there I'll give you a dollar."

"Kerrect," laughingly answered Ben, throwing his bag among the wares and climbing into the driver's seat; then, starting the horse, they began the journey.

After the sun rose the man grew better, and entered into conversation with our young friend, who vastly amused him by relating his history.

"My brother's trade would suit you, bub," he observed, when he'd got him to take you on; he manufactures Yankee notions."

"I'm his man," dryly answered Thatcher. "The business will suit me to a dot."

CHAPTER XXVIII.

GETTING EVEN WITH A PAIR OF SKINFLINTS.

THE town clock of East Wakefield was striking eight as the peddler's vehicle halted before the door of a big store, and Ben and the man alighted.

Entering the building, they proceeded to a private office at the far end, in which they found a ruddy-faced, freckled, fat, little man, who, on beholding Thatcher's conductor, cried:

"Hello, Hen; back again already? What's the matter?"

"I've had the cramps again," said Ben's friend. "I had to hire this boy to drive me back. He's an inventor, and I think will suit you."

The freckled little man turned slowly in his chair, and regarding the boy very closely, inquired:

"What have you made?"

"Well," drawled the lad, "I've invented a good many things, but, somehow, have been bi'eted by them almost as often as I've been successful;" then glancing at the stock of notions with which the store was crammed, added: "I guess I could do a good deal in your line."

The proprietor, whose name was Ivory Jones, gazed dreamily at his visitor, as though thinking what job he could set him to do, while his brother, Hen, after paying Ben the promised dollar, whispered to him:

"See here, my friend, you put up with Ivory's little peculiarities and do what he tells you, and your fortune is made."

As the peddler quitted the place, the boy thought:

"That's what they always tell me. Well, I guess this business offers a pretty good field for my genius."

"My lad," slowly demanded his new employer, "what's your notion of a rat-trap?"

Thatcher smiled in his usual dry style, and answered:

"Well, I reckon it's a machine to catch rats."

For some moments the other mechanically chewed his tobacco, and when he had spat once or twice, spoke as follows:

"Young fellow, there's a great want in our business of a rat-trap that will not only catch but kill the vermin. Now, if you can invent a thing of this kind I'll pay you a big price for your idea."

"Guess I'm the boy to do it," was the response.

"It's lucky you and I have met, mister. Just tell me where I can work, and I'll soon turn you out an apparatus."

The little man led the way into a room at the rear of the office, and, having shown Ben where he could find sheet-iron, tin, solder, wire and other material, and tools with which to operate, invited him to breakfast, remarking:

"I rise at five o'clock, and get a lot of business done before I eat. If you want to be rich don't take a meal until you have earned it."

In a short time they were seated at a table upon which were placed some plates, bread, and a dish of suspicious-looking butter, while Mrs. Jones, to whom Thatcher had been duly introduced, poured out some dark liquid from a coffee-pot, and handing Ben a cup of the stuff, inquired if he was dainty about his food.

He had, by that time, helped himself to a lump of the butter, which smelt so high and rancid that, after snuffing at it, he smiled and replied:

"Well, marm, I ain't what you call over-nice, but I can't go this stuff."

"Stuff!" she ejaculated. "Why, it cost fifteen cents a pound."

"So I should imagine," he chuckled, rising and taking his hat. "I think I had better board myself."

As he moved toward the door he heard the woman say:

"It's just like all them inventors. I never knew one who wasn't squeamish about his victuals."

"Madam," calmly answered Ben, "I know I'm only a poor wanderer, but I think more of my internal machinery than to grease it with oleomargerine."

Ten minutes afterward he was seated in a restaurant, the proprietor of which informed him that Mrs. Ivory Jones was the biggest skinflint in the city, and that he had better look out for himself in dealing with her husband.

"Oh, guess I'll fix them!" he said. "I've had to dicker with a good many folks in my time," and back he went to work.

All that day Mr. and Mrs. Jones were busy in the store, selling as fast as they could handle the money, and Thatcher noticed that they never for a moment paused, even to take a lunch at noon.

It was eight o'clock in the evening ere the boss looked in to see how his employé progressed with his work, by which time Ben had completed his invention, which he exhibited to the little man, saying:

"You see, it's a sort of short gallows. You put a piece of cheese on the end of the arm and wind up this spring in the upright part, the result is that this razor-blade on to the racket; along comes Mr. Rat and smells at the cheese; the moment his nose touches it the spring releases the sharp blade, and round it swings, nicks off the rat's head, and jerks the latter and the body to one side, the action causing the razor to fly back and reset itself, ready for the next victim. Now, how much are you going to pay me for it?"

"There's lots of rats in this place," mildly answered the man. "I tell you what I'll do. Let it remain here all night, and the first thing in the morning you come round, and according to the number of rats killed I'll remunerate you. If it is a failure, the machine is to become my property."

"If you will hand over the key of the place, and promise, on your word of honor, you won't meddle with the trap until I arrive in the morning, I'll agree," said the young inventor.

Jones gave the required pledge, and Ben, quitting the workshop, received the key and started out to find a lodging, thinking to himself:

"If they go tampering with my trap, it will serve them worse than my tool-catcher would."

The next morning he arose very early and took a walk round the back of the block on which stood Jones's notion warehouse. Climbing the fence of the yard at the rear of the store, he advanced toward the workshop. As he did so, some one inside uttered a piteous moan, and at the same time he noticed that the windows were open.

"Is that you, Ivory?" exclaimed a faint voice, which he recognized as that of Mrs. Jones. "Oh, I've done it!"

"Been at my trap," thought Thatcher, as he hid himself behind a pile of empty boxes. "I knew you'd try to swindle me, if he didn't. A woman who would give a boy fifteen-cent butter to eat would do anything."

At that instant her husband emerged from the house, and flashing a light in at the window, whispered:

"Have you got them?"

"Got them?" she snapped. "There's a whole pile of them lying round, but oh, dear! the trap has taken off two of my fingers. Help me out!"

The little man proceeded to assist her, and presently she was groaning and moaning outside, though, even then, her avarice was so great that, in her anxiety to cheat the boy, she almost forgot her pain.

"Never mind me, Ivory," she whimpered. "Go in and collect them rats, and sweep up the mess. There's a fortune in that trap, and so long as you beat the young fellow out of it, I don't mind losing my poor fingers."

The notion dealer saw her safely indoors, after which, placing an empty box under the window, he removed his coat and prepared to do as she had suggested.

Lowering his lantern inside the workshop, he stepped upon the box, grasped the sides of the window, and, with painful effort, was raising himself to the sill, when Ben, selecting a piece of scantling about three feet in length from some wood near by, silently advanced upon the old rascal.

Panting with the exertion, the man, who had partly accomplished his object, was balancing his body before venturing to drop inside, the rear portion of his person forming a beautiful mark for Thatcher to aim at.

Stepping close to him and raising his weapon aloft, Ben brought it to bear on Ivory, the first blow producing a roar that might have been heard three blocks off, and landing the man head over heels in the workshop, where he lay in a sort of fit.

Climbing into the place, the boy secured the tell-tale finger-tips, and, after counting the number of decapitated rats, quitted the building and returned to his lodging.

When he had breakfasted and had his hair fixed by a barber, he sauntered toward the warehouse, where he found Mrs. Jones attending to customers.

Her right hand was bound up, and, as she noticed the boy, she murmured to herself:

"I don't care; we've cleaned up all the mess."

"Good-morning, marm," innocently observed Ben. "How did my little invention work?"

"I don't know," she snapped. "I hurt myself this morning chopping some cold meat. You better ask my husband about your blamed invention!"

As she spoke, Ivory, who had a black eye and carried his arm in a sling, emerged from the counting-house, and shaking his head, ruefully remarked:

"The trap didn't work, Thatcher, so it's forfeited."

"Didn't work, oh?" chuckled the lad, producing the bony trophies and exhibiting them to the customers. "Perhaps these ain't your wife's fingers, neither?"

For a moment the pair appeared to be staggered, then Mrs. Jones beckoned to her husband, and whispered:

"Pay him, for the land's sake, and let him go!"

CHAPTER XXIX.

BEN CHALLENGES THE GREAT ALBANY.

IT always tickled Inventive Ben to be able to get the better of skinflints like old Jones and his wife, so, as he followed the man into the counting-house, a grim smile stole over his face, and he made up his mind that the dealer should pay handsomely for his roguery.

Closing the door after them, the little man inquired, in a low tone:

"What will you take it in? Tinware or toys?"

"In cash, of course," calmly replied the boy. "My terms are five hundred dollars."

"Five hundred what?" cried Jones, nervously clawing at his beard. "Why, the trap never killed a rat!"

"No?" smilingly drawled Ben. "Perhaps I didn't count forty of them lying there without their heads this morning! If you write had not been so confounded grasping and mean, and you had kept your word with me, I wouldn't have asked so much; as it is, I won't take a cent less than what I say."

In vain the old man pleaded; Thatcher knew he had him, and declined to abate a mill, so Ivory had to pony up.

Producing a bag of dimes from an iron safe, he began to count them slowly into piles of tens, noticing which the lad merrily observed:

"Guess I'll come back when you have got the sum ready. Meanwhile, I'll go down to the newspaper office and tell them about the joke."

"No, no," nervously pleaded Jones. "Go into the store, and I'll find you the money in bills."

The boy did as he was requested, and presently was recalled; upon which the man handed him a roll of money and bade him clear out.

"Not before I have counted this," said Ben.

Turning over the dirty stamps, he soon discovered several spurious ones, which he handed back with the remark:

"It's no use, old buster; you can't pass your queer on to me."

"Ain't they good?" innocently asked Ivory.

"I neither know nor care," was the rejoinder; "and when he had obtained genuine bills he turned his back upon the notion-dealer.

As he passed through the store the woman called him aside and whispered, in a spiteful tone:

"Young fellow, I hope your next invention will kill you."

"Don't get mad, marm," he said, winking as he spoke. "When you want your cold meat out up again you can use the same old machine."

In another moment he was sauntering along the street, looking out for a new trade. After perambulating the city he returned to his lodging and began to think over his future prospects, when some words attracted his attention, and caused him to inquire what was going on in a big shed near by.

"A walking match," said his landlord. "Chick Alexy and South Western are doing their great match against time. Why don't you go in and see the fun?"

Investing a quarter, he entered the place, where he saw two men in fancy costumes walking as though for dear life, and learned that the one who covered the greatest distance within twenty-four hours was to receive a thousand dollars and half the gate money.

Round and round the double track went the smirking pedestrians, and great was the excitement among the spectators, while Ben grimly surveyed the scene, finished to the minute, and thought whether he couldn't carry off as big a prize as the one for which they were competing.

So great became his interest that he forgot all about dinner and supper, and waited until the match was decided and Alexy proclaimed the victor; when, elbowing his way to the latter's trainer, he listened as the man explained how many miles his pupil had covered.

"I'll back that the Chick will get over more ground in a day than any other man in the world," he boasted, adding: "And what is more, I'm ready to put up my money on him. Now, anybody who wants to lose their stamps, let them put 'em up."

Mounting on to a chair, so that all might see him, Thatcher looked round on the crowd and shouted:

"Silence!"

Under ordinary circumstances, this cheeky act

would have passed unnoticed, but his face was so comical and his manner so serious, that everybody ceased speaking and glanced at him.

Unabashed by their stares, he nodded toward them and said, in his usual cautious tone:

"There's a man here announces that he wants to find somebody who will, in twenty-four hours, cover more ground than Mr. Chick Alleary. Now if he's willing to put a thousand dollars and half the gate money against my five hundred and half the gate money, I'll make a match with him, and what is more, pay my stake at once."

Thinking it was a big joke, and being quite willing to take the lad's money, the trainer accepted, and the articles of agreement were drawn up on the spot; the time appointed for the exhibition being that day week.

"You will commence the match," said the referee, "at twelve o'clock next Wednesday night, and finish it at midnight on Thursday."

"All right," was the boy's cool response; "I guess I can do it."

"Allow me to introduce you to Mr. Alleary," sarcastically remarked the trainer, bringing forward his pupil. "You'll be better acquainted with him after this day week."

The pedestrian, a good-natured, honest fellow, shook hands with Ben, and did his best to dissuade him from the task, remarking that he had beaten the best time on record, and if Thatcher would say the word his money should be returned.

"Don't be afraid 'bout me," grinned the lad. "You're going to be licked, mister, this time. If I don't mover more than twice as much ground an hour as you do, I'll eat my boots."

"Come and take a drink, young fellow," laughingly replied the champion. "You'll want to moisten your throat or you won't be able to carry out your boast."

"Ask you, all the same, mister," responded the boy. "I neither drink intoxicating liquor nor go back on my word. My name is Inventive Ben, and I've done bigger things than whip you at walking."

The next day a full account of the coming match appeared in the papers, and the reporters interviewed Ben, who, after gravely assuring them that he would be on hand to carry out his boast, quitted the town for Pottsville Centre, from which place he telegraphed to his uncle, requesting the latter to join him at once; then, hiring the top floor of an abandoned factory, measured out a track, purchased a pair of elegant boots, fitted them with a little contrivance of his own, and began a simple course of training.

His relative joined him, and after obtaining permission from the owners of the tannery, remained to act as his agent.

For five days Thatcher went at it like a little man, returning to East Wakefield on the afternoon of the sixth.

"Then you mean to try it," incredulously inquired a reporter whom they met at the depot.

"Certainly I do," was his rejoinder. "This is my uncle, Mr. John Wilkins."

"I wouldn't let the boy attempt such a feat," said the newspaper man. "He's sure to lose his money."

"Perhaps he will and perhaps he won't," gravely answered Uncle John. "You don't know him as well as I do."

After eating supper, uncle and nephew repaired to the rink, where they found Alleary and his trainer surveying the tracks, which were formed of tan laid on the asphaltum floor.

"Glad to see you, Thatcher," patronizingly remarked the pedestrian. "I began to be afraid you wouldn't turn up."

"Oh, it's you who'll have to do that," chuckled Ben. "I'm going to warm you."

"Would you like to wager a little money on the event?" demanded the trainer of Uncle John. "I'll bet you ten to one, and risk as much as you like."

"I'm a poor man," said Wilkins; "but I don't mind returning a hundred dollars on my nevvy, provided you put up your thousand."

This was done, and, after they had walked round the track, Thatcher and his relative retired to their lodging, where Wilkins received the following telegram:

"A fire broke out in the house above us, and burnt our homestead and two others clean to the ground. I have saved all our furniture, and have taken Fanny Lee down to sleep with me at my sister's. Fan's folks have lost almost everything.

"MRS. WILKINS."

When he had read this, poor old John buried his face in his hands and cried like a child.

"Cheer up, uncle," said Ben. "You'll be able to build a new house. Put all my money on my match with Alleary."

"He may win, after all," groaned his relative.

"Shan't," replied the boy. "You ought to know me better."

CHAPTER XXX.

ASTONISHING THE NATIVES.

ALL East Wakefield appeared to be interested in the extraordinary match between the champion distance-walker and the unknown boy, even Jones and his wife purchasing tickets and making up their minds to witness Thatcher's defeat.

Knowing the admiration of his countrymen and women for sensational costume, Ben had provided himself with one calculated to dazzle a blind man. His boots were of gilded leather, with thick, scarlet soles, of which, we will speak more anon. His stockings were bright green silk; his knickerbockers scarlet velvet; his vest yellow satin, and his shirt of the national colors, the right arm being starred, and the left striped.

This gorgeous outfit was duly exhibited in a glass case, placed at the entrance to the rink, and attracted universal attention.

About noon his aunt and Fanny Lee arrived, and were conducted to his hotel by a guard of newspaper reporters, the members of which were desirous of learning more particulars about Inventive Ben than he had been inclined to give. However, both Mrs. Wilkins and Fan were smart enough to hold their tongues, and the writers were compelled to manufacture their own stories.

"Glad you are come, wife," remarked Uncle John, as he welcomed her. "Nevvy's up-stairs, and won't see anybody but yourselves."

"What in the name of goodness has made him take to pedestrianism?" she ejaculated, as she and the girl followed their conductor. "It appears to me that everybody's gone walking mad."

Halting before a door on the first floor, and giving a peculiar signal, the old man quietly replied:

"Ben's all right, missis. I've put every penny I brought with me on him."

As he said this the door was cautiously opened, and in another moment they were shaking hands with Thatcher; after doing which, Mrs. Wilkins spoke as follows:

"Oh, Ben, what do you think your father and mother would say if they knew that you were going to walk for money?"

"Well," chuckled the boy, as he led her to a seat, "I hesn't say for certain, but opine if the old man knows what is going on here, he'll say, 'Do your level best, Benjamin, and whip that Alleary.'"

This irreverent reply so shocked the old lady that she did not speak for some time, while Ben, turning to Fanny, shook her by the hand and inquired after folks at Scrub Oak.

When she had told him all about the fire and the school gossip, she said:

"And do you really believe that you can walk further than the champion?"

Smiling in his old time manner, he gave vent to his peculiar, subdued laugh, and slyly winking, answered:

"I've been inventing, Fanny. You'll see me whip that coon so badly that he will be mad enough to swallow me. When I started to do this thing I only meant it as a joke, but they riled me by treating me like a fool, so I just set to work and thought out a plan, and you bet I'm going to give them something to remember me by. There's a lot of money in this thing, and Uncle John, who is a first-class man of business, is attending to my affairs nicely, so I shan't be cheated."

"But why walk in that outlandish costume?" she asked. "Everybody will stare at you so."

Ben's face giving vent to his comical chuckle, he nudged her with his elbow and whispered:

"Shoo, that's just why I am going to do it. If a fellow comes before the public dressed like folks, nobody thinks anything of him. It ain't ability that always excites popular applaud; they like to see a pedestrian look like a play-actor, and my dress will catch 'em dead."

Fanny mused a while, then observed:

"Well, Ben, I guess you know better about it than I do. I've got two dollars and mean to invest them in bonquets for you; but do tell me what your invention is?"

"Oh, you wait, Fan," he said. "You'll know all about it after the first round."

Long before midnight the rink was crammed to suffocation, every one anxiously watching for the appearance of Mr. Chick Alleary and Inventive Ben, those being the names announced on the posters and programmes.

Among the crowd were many people from Scrub Oak, Dr. Munson, Mr. Pudmore and the Briggs, father and son, being conspicuous.

Precisely at a quarter of twelve Alleary stepped upon the platform, he being accompanied by his trainer and a crew of friends, who led the cheering, which was immediately taken up by the rest of the spectators.

As the sound died away, Ben, costumed as we have described, clumped up on to the stage and made his bow.

The cheering for Alleary had been partly on account of the man's costume, consisting of Oxford shoes, white silk stockings, black velvet trunks, a white cambric shirt, and a gorgeous-colored handkerchief, like a sailor's, round his neck; however, this was what is termed "knocked higher than a kite" by Thatcher's, which caused the admiring spectators to yell with delight, and the champion to wish that he had adopted scarlet breeches and a shirt composed of the national colors.

In vain the manager endeavored to speak; the people cheered on until they were tired, and it was very evident, even if they imagined that the boy would not win the race, his quaint toe, comical smile and wink had thrown him on their hearts.

When silence was restored, the champion's trainer spoke as follows:

"Ladies and gentlemen, permit me to introduce you to Mr. Chick Alleary, champion long-distance walker of the world, and to explain the reason why he accepted that boy's challenge. He has been so constantly pestered by a pack of amateurs, that I made up my mind he should squelch the next one, and do it effectually; he will, therefore, permit Inventive Ben to walk in any way, run, tumble—in fact, to cover the ground in any style; in boots of any make, shoes, or with his bare feet; and to prove his willingness to accommodate this presumptuous youth, has allowed him to have his track swept and watered on the asphaltum—though, I need scarcely say, the lad must be an idiot to request such a thing."

As the man concluded his speech, Ben bowed to the assumed assembly, glanced significantly at the spectators, drew his hand across his mouth, set the boy fashion, coughed, smiled, and then addressed them:

"Ladies and gentlemen, permit me to introduce myself to you as Inventive Ben Thatcher, and to explain the reason why I accepted Thatcher's challenge. Being a born inventor, I thought I could make a little apparatus that would knock spots out of fellows like Chick Alleary, and I'm about to try my make and style of boots against his. If I get beaten, I ain't going to, like some fellows, lay it to my shoemaker, and say he was in the pay of my opponent; but this I will promise you, if I carry off the honors, I'll make my invention a present to the East Wakefield institution for cripples, and if I lose, I'll eat these here laid-coverings on this platform," then nodding to the champion, added: "I'm ready for you, mister."

The hands of the rink clock pointed exactly to twelve at midnight, as Ben and Alleary took their places on their respective tracks, while a band, stationed in the gallery, prepared to begin the lively air of "Off she goes."

Thatcher had the outside track, which was the smooth asphaltum of the floor, while Alleary's course was covered six inches deep with ground tan.

The champion's face was smiling, as though he held his rival in contempt, and in each hand he grasped a dry corn-cob, which was supposed to absorb the perspiration from his palms.

Ben's comical visage was a study, he evidently treating the whole matter as a big joke. He, too, carried corn-cobs, but instead of being small ones like Alleary's, they were big Californian affairs, over two feet in length.

After leaving the platform, both contestants had retired for a moment to their tents, during which brief time Alleary had swallowed a glass of champagne, and Thatcher had unscrewed the artificial soles of his boots, revealing a number of tiny wheels, and had screwed a piece of brass on each toe and heel.

When the lad stood ready to start, nobody noticed this change. However, upon the word go being uttered, he started at such a tremendous speed that the crowd shouted:

"He's skating!"

Round and round he went, making three laps to Alleary's one, until he had scored ten miles, never stopping an instant, although his opponent's trainer endeavored to cross his track, the result being a smart collision that left the man on the broad of his back.

"Rah!" yelled the tightly-packed crowd, as with a graceful sweep the young inventor landed at the foot of the platform, and, after pausing to wipe his face, climbed the steps, while the band, a German one, saluted him with "See the Conquering Hero Comes," and his opponent's friends shouted, "Go for his boots; he's a fraud!"

CHAPTER XXXI.

ANOTHER OF LONDON'S SNEAKY TRICKS.

FOR some moments there was such an uproar in the building that Ben wisely refrained from speaking, and contented himself with chewing gum and winking at Fanny, whose face beamed with the utmost satisfaction. Meanwhile, Alleary went round, moving with the clockwork swing for which he was famous, and bearing in each hand a big bouquet of flowers.

Thatcher, who had not skated but walked, had gone too fast for any one to hand him floral offerings, which were now passed up to the platform, accepted being duly acknowledged with a comical bob of the head.

When the music of the band was stopped, several quarrelsome parties ejected from the building and quiet restored, the referee then addressed the audience:

"Ladies and gentlemen, I have closely watched the walking of Inventive Ben, which, according to his opponent's offer, is fair and square. That the boy's boots are furnished with wheels and checks to prevent him slipping back is most certain, but that he cheats in using them I pronounce false. If by means of his invention he covers more ground in twenty-four hours than Alleary does, the match will be decided in his favor; at the same time there is no reason why both contestants should not use similar means."

"Excuse me," calmly remarked the boy, raising his right foot over the rail and exhibiting the sole of his boot, "there's a very good reason why he can't use Thatcher's Lightning Pedomotor. *Patent's applied for.*"

This speech was received with roars of laughter, and soon the merry boy was skimming round his track, pausing every now and then to receive various presents or to chaff the exasperated champion.

"Why don't you try a brighter costume," he said, as he lowered his speed to that of Alleary and went gliding along by his side. "You see you weren't quite so smart as you thought. I said it would be you who'd have to turn up."

All through that night the man walked steadily, making a big score; people wondering what could induce him to keep on when he knew that he must be beaten by the boy's invention.

Toward the morning Ben retired to his tent, his uncle acting as his guard, while his aunt and Fanny returned their hotel.

At daybreak only the reporters, referees, the trainer and a few spectators remained, among the party being London, his father and Ivory Jones, who, sitting apart from the rest, soon became acquainted through expressing their hatred for Inventive Ben.

Happening to overhear some of their conversation, Alleary's backer approached them and began to chat about the boy, remarking:

"If I could get hold of his boots, I'd pay handsomely for them."

"What will you give," whispered London. "I know a fellow who would not mind trying to do what you want."

"I'd pay five hundred dollars for them," cautiously answered the man.

Walking with him still further away from listeners, Joe Briggs exhibited a small bottle labeled chloroform, observing, in a low tone:

"I brought this along with a sponge to chuck into his tent and stop his winning, as I reckoned somebody beside myself would like to see him lose."

"You're a smart lad," responded the trainer. "Hurry up and do the trick before it gets too light."

"Give me my pay and I will," grinned London. "I ain't going to do the job and then be told to whistle for my money."

"I'll make a bet of it and place the stamps in that gentleman's hands," said the other, indicating Ivory Jones. "Five hundred to one that my pupil loses, then both of us will be safe."

He knew that the notion-dealer was a wealthy man, who stood high among his townsfolks, so he called the old fellow aside and handed him the amount he had promised, and Briggs gave Ivory a dollar.

No person but themselves knew of this, not even the pedestrian, who was still plodding round his track.

Alleary was an honest man, and would have been the last one to be guilty of the crime contemplated.

The lookers-on were dozing in their seats, there was no band, for the musicians had long ago retired, a heavy fog had crept into the building, and the sneak had every chance of carrying out his plot.

Moving noiselessly toward the tents, he passed behind them until they hid him from the observation of those about the judge's stand, then, kicking off his shoes, crawled, like the brute that he was, toward the spot where Ben was snoring like a trooper.

Upon arriving close to the canvas structure, he drew forth his penknife, and, pressing it against the cloth, cut a peep-hole.

The bright light shining inside prevented Mr. Wilkins from seeing the enemy, at the same time it showed Briggs all he wanted.

Ben was lying upon a mattress, sleeping, with his mouth wide open, and giving forth such a tremendous, choking snore that any noise outside was completely lost upon his guardian, who sat with the pedomotor boots upon his lap, alternately smoking, dozing and watching his nephew.

Removing the point of his knife in the canvas and enlarging the aperture, London tied the sponge to a stick, and after saturating the former with chloroform, advanced it slowly into the opening. The tent, being of stout, oiled canvas, to keep out damp, was as close as an ordinary room, thus allowing the fumes of the drug to have full effect upon both sleeper and guard.

In a short time the old man began to feel the power of the vapor. His pipe dropped from his jaws, his eyelids trembled and his head leaned forward upon his breast, while Ben ceased his noise and began to breathe heavily.

London watched these symptoms as a doctor does those of a patient, and, when old Wilkins rolled off the chair, coolly proceeded to cut the opening large enough to admit of his entrance.

Closing his nostrils with his right hand and, shutting his mouth tightly, he advanced with stealthy step.

In another instant he had secured the boots.

CHAPTER XXXII.

FANNY LEE TO THE RESCUE.

JOE BRIGGS never felt more proud than he did when, with the stolen boots hidden under his coat, he slipped on his shoes and sneaked back to Alleary's trainer, to whom he whispered:

"Got 'em. Where's the old man gone with the stakes?"

"You must wait until the match is over," cautiously replied the other. "The money is all right. Follow me down to my man's tent and I'll relieve you of your plunder."

"Ain't it about time I took a rest?" inquired the pedestrian, as he passed them. "I'm getting hungry."

"Why, six more laps, then come in," said the man. "I'm going to send this young feller to the hotel for some breakfast."

Following him to Alleary's tent, London moved into a corner and dropped the boots, after which the sport pointed to a covered basket, containing the remnant of his pupil's supper, and bade Briggs empty it and put the pedomotors at the bottom.

Joe did as he was bidden, and concealing the stolen articles beneath the empty plates, softly inquired what he was to do next.

"Carry it to my hotel," responded the other. "Take it up into my room, number thirty, and wait till I come."

Receiving the key, London raised the burden, started off, and soon arrived at his destination, little thinking that Fanny Lee had watched his exit from the rink and followed him.

"I wonder what mischief that critter has been up to," she thought, as she retraced her steps.

Passing the check-taker, and exhibiting her card of admission, she glanced at a hastily written placard posted on the judges' stand, and read as follows:

"Alleary and his opponent are breakfasting; both will resume walking at ten o'clock."

"Guess I'll see if Ben wants anything," she murmured, and, crossing the floor, reached his tent, where she said, in a loud tone: "May I come in?"

At that moment Mr. Wilkins revived, and, hearing her voice, rose and opened the tent, and staggered like a drunken man, exclaiming:

"My goodness! I've been drugged—somebody's stolen the boots!"

In an instant it flashed across the girl's mind that London was the thief, and, picking up Ben's knobstick, she made a bee-line for the hotel, while Alleary's trainer, peeping out of the latter's tent, demanded the cause of the trouble.

"Some rascal has played us a nice trick," was Wilkins's bewildered response. "See, they have cut a hole in the canvas, have chloroformed Ben and myself, and, what is worse, stolen the pedomotors."

In a short time the judges, reporters, and the few spectators who had remained all night, were gathered about the old man, who loudly denounced the scoundrel or scoundrels employed in the nefarious transaction.

"I'll swear I had nothing to do with it," said Alleary, rising from his bed. "My advice is, bring the boy round and let us hear what he says about it."

Ben was lifted out and laid on the track, and water thrown upon his face; this treatment quickly restoring him to his senses, his uncle explaining exceedingly kind and expressing by word and deed his regret at the robbery.

"So the boots are gone, are they? Well, I ain't going to give up the contest," murmured Thatcher, when informed of his loss.

"I would if I were you," remarked Alleary.

"But you ain't me," drawled Ben. "I tell you, Mister, brains are going to win. Don't you worry about me; I know who did this; it's Briggs's work. He and old Jones and a third party" (staring hard at the trainer), "put up this little job, but I'll be on the track again by six o'clock this evening."

"Very well," answered the champion's backer, whose face was as red as scarlet. "Don't you be too smart accusing people, young fellow."

Of course this conversation was duly noted by the reporters, some of whom advised Thatcher to give up the contest, while others urged him to try and finish it on foot.

The gentlemen go home for an hour or two. I'll be on the track again in time to beat Alleary," was Ben's confidential remark. "I'll win this race in spite of the odds."

Starting in his stockinged feet he proceeded to walk off the effects of the chloroform, leaving the judges and umpires to return to their stand, while his uncle aired the tent and repaired the damage done by London; meanwhile his opponent's breakfast arrived and the man enjoyed his meal.

As the clock struck eight, Mrs. Wilkins appeared with a basket containing food, noticing which, Ben re-entered his tent, and attacking the viands, laughingly related his adventures.

"I thought you looked awfully melancholy," said the good woman, as she set down her cup and glanced at her husband. "I never did like the idea of this walking match, and now I suppose we shall be beggared."

"I'm afraid so," sighed Uncle John. "If we don't get them boots back, I'm a ruined man."

"Go 'long," chuckled their nephew. "They ain't going to beat me so easy as all that. I'll fix another pair by supper-time."

He little imagined that the trainer was listening to what they said.

Leaving them at their meal, we will follow Fanny Lee.

Upon quitting the rink, she walked quickly toward the hotel, and, after describing old Briggs to the clerk, inquired what room was occupied by Alleary and his backer.

The appearance of a determined-looking girl, carrying a formidable knob-stick, made the clerk cautious how he replied, so he informed her that both the champion and his friend were at the rink.

Knowing that hotel employés usually go off duty about eight o'clock, she quitted the place and waited outside until she thought the man was relieved, when she re-entered, walked up to the counter, turned over the leaves of the register, and read:

Chick Alleary, New York, No. 31.
J. P. Smith, do., No. 30.

"Do you wish to see any one?" politely inquired

the new clerk, for she had hidden the stick under the cloak.

"I would like to go up to the ladies' parlor and wait till Mr. Smith arrives," was her response.

"Certainly," was the civil answer. "Porter, show this young lady upstairs."

Entering the elevator, she inquired of the boy who tended it whether he had seen London, at the same time minutely describing his appearance.

"He went up some time ago, miss," said the lad, "and I don't think he has gone down the stairs. He didn't look like one who would walk if he could ride. Here we are, miss; third floor."

"Thank you," politely replied Fanny to the porter. "You need not come any further. I know the way."

Turning to the left and following the numbers, she halted before the door of the trainer's room; meanwhile the elevator had descended.

Tapping lightly upon the door, she awaited a reply, which presently came in London's well-known voice, the latter exclaiming:

"Who's there?"

"Shure an' I'm the chambermaid," she cried, in an Irish voice. "Plaze let me in; I've lost me pass-key."

Cautiously unlocking the door, Briggs was about to ascertain what she was like, when, withdrawing the stick from beneath her cloak, she forced her way in, and ere he could recover from his amazement, had secured his key and turned it in the lock.

"Why," gasped the coward, gazing wildly round the apartment, in order to find another means of egress, "is that you, Fan Lee?"

Without condescending to answer the question, the intrepid girl went for him, exclaiming, as she did so:

"Where's Ben's boots?"

Desirous of holding out until the trainer, or some other assistance, arrived, the miserable sneak dodged round and round the room, looking in vain for a bell-handle, he not understanding the use of the electric annunciator.

"Oh, my!" he yelled, as she fetched him crack after crack. "You drop it, Fan, won't you? Oh, gracious, leave me alone, won't you?"

Spite of these piteous appeals she never once let up, her only remark being:

"*Where's them boots?*"

Fortunately for her, the guests were all at breakfast, and the chambermaid of the floor busily employed in reading the morning paper.

In vain the cowardly lubber endeavored to elude her blows.

Fan had often driven cattle to and from pasture, but had never hit one half so hard as she did London.

She remembered how his father had burned the canal-boat hired by Ben, and Joe's mean tricks at school; so, girl-like, did not cease her attentions until he confessed where he had hidden his plunder, upon learning which she turned the contents of the basket upon the floor, and having secured the boots, quitted the apartment, her last remark ere she locked him in being:

"Joe Briggs, if you dare move hand or foot until ten o'clock, the next time we meet I'll serve you worser!"

CHAPTER XXXIII.

GLORY AND GREENBACKS.

BEFORE descending the stairs, Fanny halted in a recess, and pulling a newspaper from her pocket, proceeded to make the boots into a parcel; this being accomplished, she returned to the elevator, which just then reached the floor.

"Did you see the person you wanted to, miss?" inquired the boy in charge of the lift.

"Yes," she nodded, handing him the key. "I'll go out by the ladies' entrance, and you give this to the clerk and ask him to hand it to Mr. Smith."

As she slipped a quarter into his palm the boy readily agreed to her request, so in quitting the house she avoided passing the office.

Hurrying to her own hotel, Fan procured a basket, into which she thrust her prize, and that done, started for the rink.

Upon nearing the main entrance she joined quite a crowd of citizens who were going her way, and excitedly discussing about the robbery, nearly all of them expressing sympathy with Ben.

Exhibiting her pass, she entered the building, arriving just in time to see Aleary start again.

"Hello, sis," cried Ben; "where have you been?"

"To find your boots," she laughingly answered, "and what's more," glancing at Smith, the trainer, "I've got them."

"Thunder! you have!" ejaculated the enraged man. "Where did you find them?"

Producing the pedomotors from the basket and exhibiting them to the fast-gathering crowd, she explained what she had done, and accused him of instigating the robbery, her story being duly noted down by the reporters.

"I deny having had anything to do with the affair," exclaimed Smith. "It's all very well to make up a lie about me. Surely nobody will take this girl's word against mine."

"I am willing to," smartly remarked Ben, as he glanced round at the smiling assembly. "It don't matter much to Fan what you say. She's found my boots."

A few minutes after this speech Ben was flying round the rink, and everybody cheering his wonderful invention.

Taking advantage of the excitement, Smith quitted the place and went to his hotel.

"There's your key," remarked the clerk, as he passed the counter.

"Where did you get it?" he surlily inquired, and on being informed, did not wait for the elevator but tore up the stairs like a madman, and on arriving in his room found London sniveling like a whipped child.

"What's the meaning of this, you precious cur?" he shouted, grasping Joe by the shoulders, and shaking him until the fellow's teeth rattled. "What do you mean by letting her have the boots?"

"Boss," moaned Briggs, crouching all of a heap in his agony, "she came in here pretending to be a chambermaid, and sailed into me with that ere George Washington stick of Ben's, and forced me to give them up."

Administering a kick that fairly raised Joe off the floor and landing him on the table, the trainer savagely exclaimed:

"I'm glad I made that bet with you. Now the boy will win, and I shall pocket your dollar."

"What! won't you pay me for my risk?" whined London.

"Nary a mill," was the angry response. "Clear out of this, or I'll give you such an other dose as the girl did."

Joe prudently made off, vowing to get even with Smith, and returned to the rink, where he sullenly watched Invictive Ben as the latter whirled round to the music of the band.

To say that he felt mad would but faintly describe his feelings, while to add to his chagrin, Fanny spied him out and gave a policeman instructions to take him in charge, noticing which he slipped among the crowd and hid himself from her sight, so the officer gave up the chase.

All that day Briggs kept in the building, but well out of sight of the policeman.

He wanted to come across Jones and to withdraw his stake from his hands, but it was eight o'clock ere he set eye on the old man, the notion-dealer having been busily engaged in his store; however, Joe was finally rewarded by seeing Ivory, who, accompanied by his wife, took up his place near him.

Approaching the skinflint, London gently pulled his sleeve and whispered:

"Say, boss, I want my dollar back."

"Dollar?" queried the aged rascal. "What do you mean?"

In vain Joe endeavored to make Ivory remember having received the stakes, and he soon became convinced that Jones meant to stick to the money, finding which he resolved to help him, so he said, in a low voice:

"See here, boss; give me a dollar and I'll forget just as well as you."

The old man fumbled in his pocket, and, handing him the required sum, rejoined his wife, leaving London feeling somewhat better, and delighted to think that he had got even with the trainer.

Spite of the disadvantage of not using the pedomotor, Aleary walked on, while Ben, who was cheered and petted, never rested unless for refreshment.

At two minutes of twelve Ben announced that he would cover a mile of ground before the clock struck, then whooped up his speed and completed the distance.

As he halted before the judges' stand, the entire assemblage sent up a roar of congratulation, and presently a placard was exhibited, upon which was written:

"Inventive Ben, 256 miles.

"Aleary, 142 miles."

Of course this had been anticipated, as every one knew, unless Thatcher's invention broke down, that he must win, spite of which they received the decision as though it had been unexpected, and, raising the boy upon their shoulders, carried him round and round the place, the band playing, "See, the conquering hero comes."

Under similar circumstances most lads would have exhibited excitement, but Ben was after the main chance, and didn't care a red for the cheering of his admirers.

After they had shouted themselves hoarse, they raised him on to the platform, where Mr. Wilkins was busily engaged in receiving money.

"A speech! a speech!" cried the audience, hearing which, Ben whispered to his uncle:

"Have they paid you up all right?"

"Every cent," answered Wilkins, rising and nodding to a policeman. "The officer will see me safe to the hotel."

Ben smiled, and bidding his relative go ahead, turned to the spectators, and, grasping the rail with both hands, regarded them with a comical twist. His features until they became quite silent, when he spoke as follows:

"Ladies and gentlemen, when I challenged Mr. Chick Aleary I hadn't the most remote idea how I was going to whip him, but after I had paid over my money it struck me that I might invent a little attachment for my boots that would enable me to beat any pedestrian in creation. Spite of Smith, Briggs & Co., I've done the trick, and here," kicking off his pedomotors and handing them to the referees, "are the articles which I promised to the Institution for Crippled, for whom you can make as many as you like. In conclusion, I thank you for your kindness, and the newspaper gentlemen for writing such beautiful histories of my life and adventures, remaining your obliged friend, Benjamin Thatcher."

His manner was so comical that as he drawled out the last sentence of his speech a tremendous cheer was started, even Aleary joining in the shout, and, as the boy descended the steps, everybody crowded about him and offered him presents, among them being a bull-dog, a box of cigars, packages of candy and bundles of bouquets.

Acknowledging all these, and accepting the flowers for Fanny, he retired to his tent, around which was drawn a cordon of policemen.

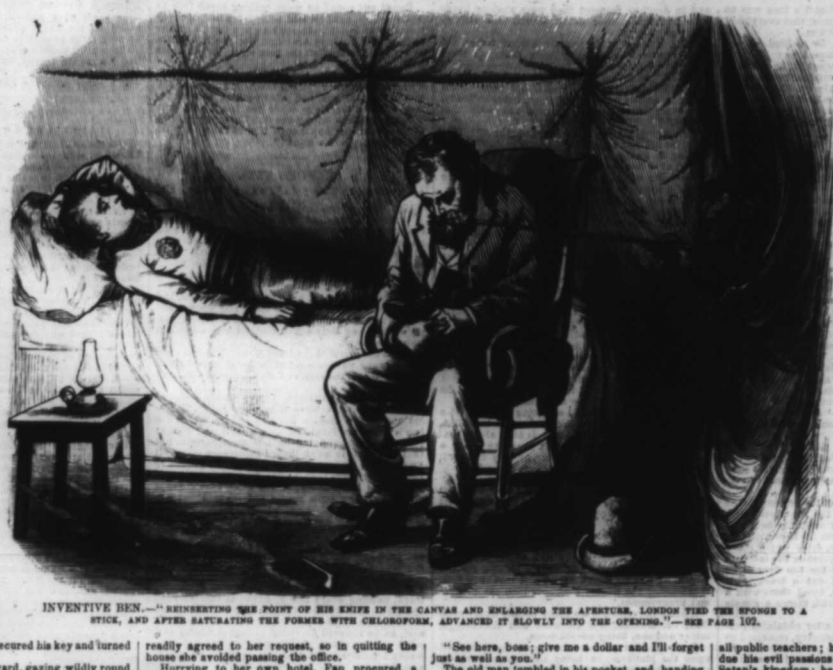
Quickly stripping off his gaudy costume, he donned his every-day garments and threw the silken ones among the gaping crowd that still lingered in the building.

Each article was eagerly seized and torn into little strips, which were retained as souvenirs; then, with a final cheer, the assemblage dispersed.

"There's popularity," chuckled the boy, as he joined Fanny and his aunt. "I think I've done it this time, and made Rome howl with my invention. I have a wagonload of bouquets in there; I don't suppose that London will come and steal them to-night."

"We'll fetch them in the morning," laughingly answered Fanny. "I think you'd best go home and get some sleep."

As they moved toward the door, Ivory and his wife crept from behind some seats and endeavored to mingle with the crowd, when, quick as a flash, the trainer, who was on the lookout, went for the old man, remarking:



INVENTIVE BEN.—"REINSERTING THE POINT OF HIS KNIFE IN THE CANVAS AND ENLARGING THE APERTURE, LONDON TIED THE SPONGE TO A STICK, AND AFTER SATURATING THE FORMER WITH CHLOROFORM, ADVANCED IT SLOWLY INTO THE OPENING."—SEE PAGE 102.

"See here, Mr. Jones I want five hundred dollars of you."

To the amusement of all but Smith, the notion-dealer flatly denied ever having received the money, and threatened to give the other into custody.

This so tickled Ben that he laughed outright; on hearing which Smith, who was fairly beside himself, drew a revolver and leveled it at Thatcher's head, the act being followed by a loud report.

(To be continued.)

"Invinctive Ben" was commenced in No. 848.

PUNCTUATING PUZZLE.

THE following is a description of a very bad man indeed. The puzzle is to reform him and make a pre-eminently good man, just by altering the punctuation:

"He is an old and experienced man in vice and wickedness; he is never found in opposing the works of iniquity; he takes delight in the downfall of his neighbors; he never rejoices in the prosperity of any of his fellow-creatures; he is always ready to assist in destroying the peace of society; he takes no pleasure in serving the Lord; he is uncommonly diligent in sowing discord among his friends and acquaintances; he takes no pride in laboring to promote the cause of Christianity; he has not been negligent in endeavoring to stigmatize all public teachers; he makes no exertions to subdue his evil passions; he strives hard to build up Satan's kingdom; he lends no aid to the support of the Gospel among the heathen; he contributes largely to the evil adversary; he pays no attention to good advice; he gives great heed to the devil: he will never go to heaven; he must go where he will receive the just recompense of reward."

Distinguished Scholars of Our Schools.

JOHN D. MILLS,

PUPIL OF GRAMMAR SCHOOL NO. 3, BRIGHT STREET, JERSEY CITY, N. J.

JOHN D. MILLS is a pleasant-faced and amiable boy who is distinguishing himself in the studies of the second division of the first class of Grammar School No. 3, Bright Street, between Barrow Street and Jersey Avenue, Jersey City, N. J. "He is a pupil who gives us no trouble," said the Principal, "but of his own accord studies diligently and well." He was born in Newark, November 20th, 1865, making him thirteen years of age. He is the son of Albert and Amanda Mills. When about six years old he commenced his studies in a private school, and he continued in schools of this kind and in the public schools of Newark for some length of time. At length he became a pupil in No. 3, in Jersey City, in the Primary Department. He has studied with marked success. More than this, his improvement has been more and more evident as he has advanced, showing that it is permanent and associated with a development and grasp of his own mind. He is very attentive and very obedient. No other pupil learns anything from him except that which is beneficial. He has modest, unpossessed manners. He is a noble boy, whose life is made up of intelligent application to study and kind deeds at home.

JOHN D. MILLS, PUPIL OF GRAMMAR SCHOOL NO. 3, BRIGHT STREET, JERSEY CITY, N. J.

HANNAH THIEN,

PUPIL OF GRAMMAR SCHOOL NO. 30, WALCOTT STREET, BROOKLYN, N. Y.

HANNAH THIEN is a girl who has distinguished herself in the classes of Grammar School No. 30, Walcott, near Van Brunt Street, Brooklyn, N. Y. She is now in the second grammar class, and when called up by the Principal to be introduced to us, gave evidence not less of her modesty than her intelligence. She was born in Germany, July 10th, 1865, and is, therefore, in her fourteenth year. She is the daughter of the late John and

HANNAH THIEN, PUPIL OF GRAMMAR SCHOOL NO. 30, WALCOTT STREET, BROOKLYN, N. Y.

Hannah Thien. She was nine years old when she came to this country, and previously had attended school in Germany. She entered the lowest class in the Primary Department of No. 30, and has shown remarkable diligence and ability in the different studies in which she has engaged. At one of the examinations it was found that she could be skipped over the next class to a higher one. Her present per centage is ninety-four, and from day to day her improvement is very marked. She is a thoughtful and amiable girl. She has a great deal of perseverance, and she is very firm in doing whatever comes in the line of duty. In school she is a model of obedience and propriety, and in the other walks of her daily life she displays characteristics which make her beloved. Grammar School No. 30 has in its three departments about eleven hundred pupils. Charles McLaughlin is the efficient Principal of the Grammar Department, which has over three hundred pupils.

A FEMININE CRUSOE.

ALONE ON A DREARY, DESERT ISLAND IN THE PACIFIC OCEAN FOR EIGHTEEN YEARS —HER FINAL DISCOVERY AND RESCUE.

THE romance of "Robinson Crusoe," woven so ingeniously by the imaginative De Foe from the slender thread of fact afforded by the narrative of Alexander Selkirk, who, for over four years, was the sole human inhabitant of the lonely island of Juan Fernandez, possesses a perennial interest. It appeals to the sympathies of the reader, and by the fascination of its style almost persuades him to accept it as veritable history.

The story which we are about to relate, though true in every particular, possesses a remarkable similarity in many of its incidents to the tale told by De Foe, and affords another illustration of the adage that "Truth is stranger than fiction."

In the Spring of 1835 the small schooner *Poor ex Nada*, built at Monterey, was chartered by Lewis T. Burton and Isaac J. Sparks for an otter-hunting expedition from Santa Barbara to the coast of Lower California.

The schooner sailed in May; but the trip not proving so successful as was anticipated, she returned as far north as San Pedro, where she remained at anchor during a portion of the month of August of the same year. It being known that the small island of San Nicholas, situated about seventy miles southwest of San Pedro, and a little further southeast from Santa Barbara, was inhabited by a number of Indians, the *Poor ex Nada* was dispatched to remove them to the main land.

Nineteen men, women and children were taken on board the schooner, which was preparing to depart, when one of the Indian mothers discovered that two of her offspring had been forgotten and left on the island. With true maternal devotion she sprang into the water and swam to the shore in search of the missing children, one of whom was three years of age, and the other an infant unable to walk. Her hurried search was unavailing, and, abandoning all hope of finding the babes, she returned to the beach just in time to see the schooner sailing away with all her friends on board. She called frantically for some one to take her to the vessel, but received no reply but the one sad word, *cuidado* (to-morrow), which never after ceased to ring in her ear, and was repeated on her dying bed.

The schooner never went back to the island, which was not again visited until 1851, when George Nidever, another hunter, stopped there for a few days. He was not previously aware that the place was inhabited, but on this occasion he became convinced that such was the case. He noticed three small circular inclosures about two hundred yards from the beach, and about a mile apart.

They were about six feet in diameter, and made of brush, the walls five feet high, with a small opening on one side. Near these openings were sticks of drift-wood stuck in the ground in the form of a triped, supporting dried seal-blubber. These inclosures appeared to be simply wind-breaks, affording no protection from the rain. He also saw a mysterious footprint, and judged it to be that of a woman, from its small size and arched centre. An approaching storm obliged Nidever's vessel to leave the island without allowing him to pursue his investigations any further. Mr. Nidever having seen many otter on his first trip to the island, made a second during the Winter of 1852, and being requested by the Mission Fathers of Santa Barbara, he and a party determined to make a careful hunt for the supposed lone inhabitant of the island.

Within half a mile of the head of the island they discovered a basket in the crotch of a bush or small tree, covered with a sealskin, and containing a dress made of shags' skins—a sea fowl common in that section—carefully folded up, and several square pieces of skins similar to those of which the dress was made; also a rope made of seal sinews, abalone shell fish hooks, bone needles, etc. As it was late, and time for them to return to their boats for the night, Mr. Nidever scattered the contents of the basket on the ground, so that upon his return he could judge of the presence or absence of the owner by finding them gathered up or remaining as he left them. The following four or more days were spent in otter-hunting, and before the search for the Indian woman was renewed a southeast gale compelled them to seek a more hospitable harbor at the island of San Miguel.

A third expedition, made to the island in 1853, by Nidever, Charles Brown, and four Indians from the Santa Barbara Mission, was more successful.

On the day after landing Mr. Brown discovered the object of their search at a distance, and cautiously approaching in an opposite direction from the remainder of the party, got quite close to her without being observed. She was in one of her pens or wind-breaks, clothed in a garment made of the skins of the shag, without sleeves, low-necked, and, as observed when standing up, extending almost to the ankles.

She was sitting cross-legged, skinning seal-blubber with a rude knife made of a piece of hoop-iron driven into a piece of wood. There was no covering on her head, excepting a thick mass of matted hair of a yellowish-brown color, due to the exposure to the sun and air. The hair was short, looking as though the free ends had rotted off. She would occasionally raise her hand and shade her eyes, and look toward the other men on the sandy plain near the beach, whom she evidently saw.

The balance of the party were now signaled, in order that she might be captured if she attempted to escape. To the surprise of all, she made no attempt to get away, but greeted each one as they approached with a bow and a smile, and chattered all the time in a dialect that none of them understood, although the Indians accompanying Mr. Nidever were acquainted with several Indian dialects. She was talking apparently to herself from the time Mr. Brown approached within hearing distance until she was made aware of his presence.

The expression of her face was pleasing, her features were regular, and her complexion much fairer and her form more symmetrical than that of the Indian women on the mainland; and she is believed to have belonged to a different and superior race. By signs and other means of communication she was made aware that they wanted her to accompany them, and without any apparent hesitation she made ready to follow.

In their course to where the schooner lay at anchor they found a beautiful spring of water issuing from the back above the beach, under a shelving rock. The cracks or fissures in this rock were stock full of bones, and there were other evidences of an encampment of the lone inhabitant of the island. These bones were used for nourishment, obtained by sucking; they were dried and resucked many times, showing that occasionally she was put upon short rations; but, at the time of her discovery, she appeared to have an abundance, such as it was.

She retained all her teeth, but they were worn low, supposed to be due to her chewing tough and solid articles of food. Her age appeared to be about fifty years. Mr. Brown made her a skirt of ticking, with which, and a sailor's cotton shirt and a black necktie, her dress was complete.

A severe storm arose, and embarking with their island queen, the men soon found themselves at sea in a storm. She made signs that she could stop the storm, and obtaining permission she knelt on the deck facing the quarter whence the wind came, and commenced muttering something supposed to be a prayer. She soon got up, and continued the prayer at intervals during the day, apparently without fear, and when the wind began to abate she turned to her fellow-voyagers, and with a smile made signs that her prayers had been answered. She was taken to the house of Mr. Nidever, in Santa Barbara, where she became the centre of attraction.

The Mission Fathers took a great interest in her, sending to Los Angeles and other places, hoping to find some one who could converse with her, but failed. Even the Peplmariopa Indians, who were said to have had an acquaintance with the Indians on the island, could not understand her.

Two offers, one of $1,000, for the privilege of taking her to San Francisco, were refused by Mr. Nidever. When found she was in excellent physical condition, strong and active; but the eating of fruit and vegetables brought on a sickness, which, in connection with an injury to the spine received by falling from a porch, terminated her life four weeks later, or seven weeks from the time she landed.

Her dress of shag skins, basket and trinkets, were given to Father Gonzales, of the mission, who, it is said, sent them to Rome. Messrs. Nidever and Brown are still living, and it is on their authority that that foregoing strange narrative is given.

A FEMININE CRUSOE.—AN INDIAN WOMAN WHO HAD LIVED ALONE FOR EIGHTEEN YEARS ON A DESERT ISLAND IN THE PACIFIC OCEAN IS DISCOVERED AND RESCUED.

THREE MERRY BOYS:

Their Adventures at School.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

WHICH NEARLY CLOSES THIS EVENTFUL HISTORY—A FRIENDLY PANTY, WHICH ENDS IN THE USUAL MANNER—MR. MAKEMSMART, THE DISTURBER, GETS THE WORST OF IT.

TO describe Mr. Makemsmart's rage would be impossible, but he obtained some consolation in bullying Mr. Writher, and thrashing half the school—a work of art which cost him at least a shilling for canes.

"The boys' parents shall divide the amount of damage," he said. "I will put it down in their bills."

"But they may refuse to pay it," Mr. Writher moaned.

"In that case," Mr. Makemsmart replied, "the owner of the chaise must go to law. I will not be a farthing out of pocket."

The boys were rather jubilant than otherwise

It now wanted but two days to the end of the term, and the Three Merry Boys and Tony Limpback would turn their backs on Wiggleborough School and enter into college life.

"We have not much time to spare if we want any more fun," Harry Walpole said, "and I have been thinking of the best way to make use of the few hours we have before us."

"I vote that we pack up and keep quiet," Tony Limpback said; "I want to go home feeling a little more comfortable than I do now."

"Well, we'll leave you out if you think proper," Harry Walpole replied. "We don't want a funky fellow in our party."

"I'm no more funky than you are," Tony Limpback said, wrathfully. "I only said it because I don't want to hop about on crutches all the holidays. I believe that Mr. Makemsmart would delight in following me down to the station with a cane in his hand, and give me a stinger as a parting salute."

The Three Merry Boys laughed at this, and did not contradict the assertion.

"I have been thinking," Harry Walpole said, "that it would not be a bad idea to part on friendly terms with all our old enemies. What do you say, lads? Shall we give Soker, Salt, William, Job Langford and Slapdasher a feast before we go? It will not cost much, and I'll be bound that they'll be only too glad to respond to the invitation."

"I should like it above all things," Willie said; "but where is the feed to come off?"

"At Titus Salt's house, if possible," Walpole re-

plied; "but if any obstacle is thrown in the way, we must find another place."

"Salt's wife wouldn't dare us over the threshold of her house to save her life," Tony Limpback said; "and unless it was worked very nicely, I don't think that any of them would listen to us."

"Well," said Walpole, "I think I can work the oracle. Will you leave it in my hands?"

"Yes, yes," the boys cried.

Later in the day Harry Walpole went out alone, in search of Titus Salt, whom he found, pipe in mouth, his eyes fixed thoughtfully on the horizon."

Walpole touched him on the shoulder, and the old man turned sharply round.

"Oh, it's you, is it?" Titus said, stepping back and preparing for hostilities. "Well, what do you want, you——"

"No abuse, Titus," Walpole said. "I am come to tell you that some of us are going to leave this place, perhaps for ever."

"That's a comfort, at any rate," Titus Salt said. "Is that all you've got to tell me?"

"No. It is not," Harry Walpole replied; "you and your friends have not been on very good terms with the boys, and they have sent me to say that they wish to bury the past in a friendly meeting."

"If I thowt as 'ow they meant it, I'd be the fust to 'old out my 'and," Salt said; "but I knows the ways o' boys, likewise their games, and I don't mean tor fall into a trap, nor Villiam, neither."

"I am sorry you are so suspicious," Walpole returned, "as we had arranged everything—a leg of mutton supper, with plenty of beer."

"Where's the supper to come off?" Titus asked, grinning in spite of himself.

"At your house, if you and your good wife have no objection," Walpole replied. "Soker, Langford, and Slapdasher will be asked, and you can invite two or three friends, if you like."

"It sounds genuine," Titus said, thoughtfully. "I'll 'ear wot Maryiar says, and let you know this 'arternoon."

"Very good," Walpole replied; "but you must not be later than three o'clock, as the supper must be to-morrow, if it is to be at all, as the next day we shall be all busy making preparations for our departure."

Punctually at three o'clock Titus Salt presented himself at the school-gates, and beckoning Harry to him, said:

"Maryiar, as is one o' the best women alive, ain't got no objections, providin' there ain't more than four of you present."

"That is just the number we decided on," Walpole said. "All right, Titus, I will send the necessary things to your house, and you may expect us not later than seven o'clock. Let everything be ready by that time, please, as we shall not be able to stay more than an hour."

Titus departed in high glee, and meeting Slapdasher, communicated the joyful news to him.

"I've heerd on it," he said; "I met Job and he told me, and he's now lookin' for Soker. I say, Titus, them boys ain't so bad, after all."

"I'm sfeered that we've wronged 'em many a time," Titus said, sorrowfully; "but we'll make amends for it to-night."

Titus Salt went to bed more composed that night than he had done since he had become acquainted with the merry boys.

But he was suddenly startled from his slumber by Maryiar uttering a most unearthly yell.

"What is it?" he gasped.

Maryiar pointed to the window through which the moon cast her luminous rays.

Titus looked, and his vision met a sight that curdled his blood and took away all speech.

The head and neck of a white horse with gleaming red eyes was pushed into the room through the window, and unearthly sounds were heard from without.

The spectral head now began to nod at them; slowly at first, and then rapidly.

While Titus and Maryiar were looking on at it spell-bound, the head flew off and fell to the ground, and a roar of merry laughter from without explained the mystery.

"It's them busted young varmints of schoolboys," cried Titus, jumping out of bed.

The horse's head was made of white pasteboard, and the eyes of red glass, with a light behind them.

Salt crumpled it up and hurled it out of the window after the merry boys, whom he saw hurrying back in the direction of the school.

"I'll be heven with 'em for this," he muttered, as he returned into bed.

The evening came, and Maryiar, gay in ribbons, and assisted by the wife of a neighboring fisherman, laid the cloth, and brightened up the knives and forks.

Slapdasher came, lustrous in a white hat and emerald-green waistcoat and pink glass buttons. Soker came afterward, and was intrusted with the management of the beer and grog, with which he made himself so busy that his eyes soon began to roll fearfully in his head. Job was not long in putting in an appearance, and very handsome he looked in a bottle-green coat and scarlet necktie, to say nothing of his collar, which covered his ears. Then came the boys, and Maryiar, with her face literally beaming with smiles, advanced toward them, and catching Tony Limpback in her arms, squeezed him till he roared for mercy.

"Let bygones be bygones," she cried, with an outburst of motherly feeling. "Come here, Villiam, and shake hands with the young gentleman."

Villiam obeyed timidly, looking very sheepish and shrinking back, as if he expected a thrashing; but all went as merry as a marriage-bell, and presently the wife of the neighboring fisherman brought in the first leg of mutton.

"Where's Soker?" Salt said, taking up the carving-knife and fork. "Wot's he a-doin' of in the back-kitchen?"

"He's looking after the beer and sperrits," Maryiar said. "I'll call him."

She called once, twice, and thrice, and presently a shuffling footstep was heard.

Soker staggered into the room, and mistaking the coal-scuttle for a chair, sat down upon it with a crash, and rolled into the fender.

"Wot's the matter o' this?" Salt cried. "Why, he can't be drunk!"

"No, I ain't drunk!" Soker replied, groping about amongst the ashes. "I'm hovercome with the smell o' them sperrits."

Job Langford and Jonah Slapdasher rose and lifted him into a chair, but he bounced out of it, and waving his arms frantically, roared out:

"Do you think I'm a-goin' to sit down with sich rubbish? No, I won't disgrace myself."

"Soker," Maryiar said, and every ribbon in her cap quivered, "you forget yourself!"

"No, I don't," Soker replied; "I knows where I ham, and who I'm talking to. I'm a horned gentleman, and to sich I gives my company."

"He's gone wrong," Salt said, and then a horrible thought flashed through his brain.

"Langford, go and bring in the beer."

"Ha, ha, ha! Ho, ho, ho!" Soker laughed, scornfully.

The boys looked at each other and winked. They knew what was coming.

"Why," said Soker, picking up a lump of coal as big as his head, "I've a jolly good mind to chuck this in among yer—that I have."

He would have done it, too; but Jonah Slapdasher rose and hugged him round the neck, and both fell struggling and kicking on the floor.

Just as Job Langford came running back, with his face aflame with excitement, Titus Salt's personal friends rose to a man.

"Wot's the matter?" Titus gasped.

"Matter!" Job shrieked. "There ain't no beer and there ain't no sperrits. Nothing but hempty bottles."

"I thort as much," Titus Salt said, and sat down flat in his chair. "Remove the wiper; he's no longer a friend o' mine."

They did remove him, hustling and kicking him all over the place, but Soker, actuated with a strength not his own, floored four fishermen in as many seconds, and then kicked the table over.

Maryiar screamed as she received the leg of mutton in her lap, Job Langford staggered about roaring with his eyes full of onion-sauce, and Villiam, determined to do something, snatched a saucepan full of gravy and brought it down on the crown of his father's head.

Titus retaliated by throwing a pile of plates at his son, and so, amidst the rattle of tin utensils, and the crashing of crockery-ware, Soker, the traitor, was dragged into the street.

Actuated by a series of hearty kicks, he rushed wildly across the street and fell into the arms of a gentleman, who, alarmed and astonished, brought the back of his head in contact with the sharp edge of a doorpost.

This was Mr. Makemsmart, and, maddened with pain and passion, he seized Soker by the throat and bore him to the ground.

"It's all ri'!" Soker said, pleasantly. "No damage done, I 'spose, guv'nor?"

"You intoxicated hound," Mr. Makemsmart said. "Beg my pardon, or you shall be sent to prison."

"I never begged a man's parding yet, and I won't do it now," Soker roared. "Take your 'ands off my throttle, or I'll smile you in a wital part. It's all through them boys o' yours."

"My boys!" Mr. Makemsmart said, turning suddenly cold. "What on earth have they to do with it? Where are they?"

"In Salt's 'ouse," Soker said; "if you don't believe me go and see for yourself."

Mr. Makemsmart left Soker lying on the ground, and with one kick sent Mr. Salt's door flying open. And in the room, helping to put the room tidy, he beheld four of his pupils.

"Come out!" the schoolmaster yelled. "How dare you mix with such a common herd? You ought to be thoroughly ashamed of yourselves."

"Look here!" Maryiar said, with her arms akimbo, as she confronted the enraged gentleman. "perhaps you will tell me who you mean by the common herd?"

"My good woman," Mr. Makemsmart replied, backing precipitately into the street, "I have nothing to say to you. Those boys are my pupils, and I command them to leave this house and go with me."

"Yah!" Maryiar sneered, thrusting her face into Mr. Makemsmart's; "if I was a man I'd make you pay for calling honest people names."

"Boys!" Mr. Makemsmart shrieked, "will you come away, or will you compel me to drag you out by sheer force?"

"I think we had better go," Walpole said. "It ain't worth while making him wild, now that we are so near leaving him for good."

Mr. Makemsmart overheard this remark, and spun round just in time to receive Soker in his arms for a second time.

"It's weary 'ard," Soker moaned, shedding bitter tears, "that I should be sarved in this manner. They said I drank the beer and sperrits, but it's a lie, master."

"I know nothing about it," Mr. Makemsmart cried, excitedly; "and what is more, I don't want to. Get away, you wretched man!"

The boys went out in the street, and on their way to the school, leaving Mr. Makemsmart to get away as best he could.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

AU REVOIR.

PRESENTLY they heard a scuffle, then a crash as the door was smashed in, and they saw Mr. Makemsmart reeling blindly up the street, with his hat planted firmly over his nose.

"I say, here's a go!" Tony Limpback cried, in dismay; "we had better sheer off or he'll do some of us a mischief. I wonder who gave him that crack!"

"Maryiar," Walpole replied; "I saw her do it with a rolling-pin. Come on, boys, we can do no good."

Within the schoolhouse all was confusion and commotion, and when Mr. Makemsmart reached his study, and heard the din going on above his head, he came to the conclusion that he had better wait till the morning.

Perhaps he was wise in taking this course, as the Three Merry Boys and Tony Limpback having told their story, were supported by all except Smaller, and a riot would have been the consequence had the schoolmaster interfered.

Mr. Writher had locked himself in his own room, so the boys were left to themselves.

Left to themselves, did I say? Well, you should have seen them bolstering each other till the feathers flew about like leaves in Autumn.

Then the wild struggling heap of legs and arms in every corner, and the unmistakable sound of hard slaps, mingled with the agonized cries of the recipients, rang through every room; but at last even the boys grew tired, and when Job, two hours later than his usual time round for the lights, he found peace and quiet.

The next morning, when something like order was restored, Mr. Makemsmart rose to his feet and called for silence.

The fierce rage he had been in, something like a smile played on his lips as he looked at the boys. Perhaps he remembered his own schooldays, and in his heart forgave the youngsters. Hear what he said:

"In a short time," he said, linking his thumbs in the armholes of his waistcoat, "you will all be away from me, some of you never to return as my pupils; but were I to say that I am really glad to part with you, I should speak an untruth. (Here Tony Limpback groaned incredulously.) We have trod the path of knowledge harmoniously, taking all things into consideration (another groan from Tony), and, therefore it is with regret that I say *au revoir* to most, and farewell to some. This is not a time to mention names, (here he looked hard at Limpback,) but one or two have given me cause for much anxiety and regret, and I can only trust that those I allude to will think of the past with sorrow, and act in the future as become the sons of true gentlemen. Boys, once more good-by, and when you are away, enjoying yourselves at home, at least think of me, not as a stern man, but a just one, who wishes you all well, and all the good things of this season, when there should be peace and good will."

The boys cheered vociferously, and almost at the same instant Job put his head in at the door and announced that the stage was at the door to take the boys away, bag and baggage.

Then commenced such a shaking of hands; and Mr. Makemsmart found his arms working like a pair of excited pump-handles, and even Mr. Writher, disliked as he usually was, came in for a share.

Job Langford got dreadfully mixed and hot about the toes, but, to his astonishment, silver pieces rained into the palms of his hands, and he shouted joyfully with the rest.

The way the boys assailed that stage was, to use a common pariance, a caution, and both the conductor and driver were tipped with a lavishness only seen when people are bent on pleasure.

Mr. Makemsmart stood at the door, waving a red-silk pocket-handkerchief large enough for a banner for a Sunday-school treat, and it flourished like one, as with a rattle of hoofs and three times three from the boys, the stage turned a corner and was lost to view.

"I am sorry to lose one of them," Mr. Makemsmart said, huskily, turning to Mr. Writher. "With all their faults, they are but what we were once ourselves."

"Verily," said Mr. Writher, who was standing in a draught, and shivered with the cold, "I do not think that I was ever like one of them."

"Probably not," Mr. Makemsmart assented; "but, sir, it is nothing to your credit to say so. I confess that I have often been enraged with them all, some, perhaps, more particularly; but I am proud of them, sir—yes, proud of them, and I wish them every joy in life."

Mr. Writher did not expect this.

He turned away with a disappointed look on his face and an evil glitter in his eyes.

THE END.

A POEM BY NAPOLEON BONAPARTE.

THE following poem, which has never before appeared in print, was originally written by Napoleon Bonaparte in the military school of Brienne, which he left at the early age of fifteen to enter *l'Ecole Militaire* at Paris, October 17th, 1780. His admission to the latter was through the report to the Chevalier de Beralic, the Director of Military Schools, which read as follows:

"Monsieur de Bonaparte (Napoleon), born August 15th, 1769, four feet ten inches in height, has passed the fourth class, has a strong constitution, enjoys excellent health, is of a very submissive and yielding disposition, of irreproachable conduct, has always distinguished himself by a singular application to the study of mathematics, is pretty well advanced in history and geography, but does not stand well in Latin, for which reason he has thus far been unable to go beyond the fourth class, as above stated. He deserves, nevertheless, to enter *l'Ecole de Paris*."

THE DOG AND THE RABBIT.

Cæsar, a well-known pointer of his day,
By success emboldened, proud and insolent,
Came and stood by where a poor rabbit lay,
By fatigue rendered nigh inanimate.
"Surrender!" cried the dog, in thundering tone,
Which fell upon the little one's ears like a knell,
"I am Cæsar, whose exploits to all are well known
Here and upon all the rest of the earth as well."
The poor little bunny, on hearing this great name,
Looked up to Heaven, and, in a penitent frame,
And trembling voice, asked the pointer to state
What, if surrendered, would be his fate?
"Thou shalt certainly die." "Die!" said the little one;
"And what if I now should make an attempt to run?"
"Thy death would be equally sure." "What," said bunny,
"My life in any event a forfeit must be?
In this case your Highness must needs pardon me
If I now make the attempt once more to be free."
No sooner said than done. Onward the rabbit sped.
Cato might have blamed him; I think bunny was right,
For the hunter close by had him hardly in sight.
When he aimed and fired—and the great dog fell dead.
La Fontaine's moral draws from this would doubtless be
The ancient one: "Help thyself and God will help thee."
With which great injunction I certainly agree.

DIVING, PAST AND PRESENT.

By WILLIAM HARDING.

IT may be safely said that diving, or the art of remaining under water for a certain length of time without coming to the surface for fresh air, is divided into three distinct branches. At the head of the list is the diver proper, or man who plunges down into the depths of the ocean without any machine or apparatus to give him air. Secondly, we find the armored diver, who, clad in the curious and complicated dress invented by modern engineers, explores the hulls of sunken ships and helps to recover lost treasures. Thirdly, but not least, are the ponderous machines called diving-bells, used in the construction of bridges, piers, etc.

Let us begin with the primitive diver.

The natural constitution of man entirely unfits him for remaining under water with safety for more than a few moments; but it has been stated that the pearl-divers of Ceylon can remain under water for six minutes, a statement that we beg leave to doubt.

Doctor Hally relates an instance of a Florida Indian who remained under water for two minutes; this is regarded as an extreme case. The Hawaiian Islanders are said to be amongst the most expert of all diving men. An instance of their skill is related in Franchère's "Narrative of a Voyage to the Northwest Coast of America."

Two of them were induced to go down in fourteen fathoms of water in search of two sheaves lost overboard. They went down several times, each time bringing up shells as a proof that they had been to the bottom.

"We had the curiosity to hold our watches while they dived, and were astonished to find that they remained four minutes under the water. That exertion appeared to me to fatigue them a great deal, to such a degree that the blood streamed from their nostrils and ears. At last one of them brought up the sheaves, and received the promised recompense, which consisted of four yards of cotton."

The lungs retain, at each ordinary expiration, considerable carbonic acid. By breathing deeply for a short time the quantity is lessened, and the blood becomes more than usually aerated and capable of performing its functions for a longer time than usual without renovation.

The pressure exerted by the water is not only felt in the lungs, but upon all parts of the body, to a sensible degree. At a depth of seventeen feet it amounts to about seven and a half pounds to every square inch of surface, and increases about 0.44 of a pound with every additional foot of depth.

A picturesque scene is presented by the encampments of the Indians with their families, who are mainly supported through the year by the Mexican pearl fishery. They impatiently await the coming of their employers, and their approach is the signal for a joyful tumult. All join in the shout of welcome, and many plunge into the sea, to show by their various performances in the water their superior fitness for the labors they are anxious to undertake.

Loud cries of "Engage me, master." "I will make your fortune." "You employed me last year," "I am not only the best of divers, but I am always lucky," are heard on every side.

The contract is obliged to obtain a concession from the government, makes his selection and takes with him those he deems the ablest hands.

The conditions of the engagement secure the diver's maintenance during the fishery, and a share of the unopened oysters. This requirement granted, shaking hands seals or completes the bargain.

The Mexican fishing is prosecuted from the 15th of May to the 15th of August.

The day after the arrival of the divers the places most likely to prove favorable are sought by experienced eyes, and a sort of rehearsal is gone through by the Indians. They plunge to a moderate depth, and remain but a short time under water.

Then they prepare themselves for the severe task. Their children, also amphibious, remain on the bank, and are thus prepared to take up the calling of a diver at a future day.

The Indians dive fearlessly, being accustomed to such exercises from their infancy, plunging to a depth of more than ten fathoms.

By two cords, a diving-stone and a net, connected with the boat which always accompanies them, the diver, putting the toes of his right foot on the rope of the diving-stone, and the left on the net, seizes the two cords with one hand, and closing his nostrils with the other, goes to the bottom of the water, collects and puts into his net as many shells as he can reach while he remains below, and returns to the surface for breath. They are generally under water about two minutes, but many of them can stay a much longer period.

On emerging from the sea he discharges water from his mouth and nose, and sometimes even blood, but this does not deter him from presently resuming his labors. Soon will frequently make fifty trips in one forenoon.

Divers soon find themselves able to remain under water two minutes; and, as I have previously stated, some occasionally stay longer.

Young divers are at first unpleasantly affected; blood rushes from their nose, eyes, and ears when they come up. This is caused by the compression of the lungs. It is a painful sight, but rest and salt-water are the only remedies applied; and after a short time they get quite used to it, and the bleeding is rarely renewed.

The opening of the season is marked by a ceremony intended to be solemn. A sorcerer is brought with the divers to exorcise the sea. In the performance of his curious duty, this highly-gifted personage addresses awful language to the dog-fish, setting forth his past atrocities, and warning him to act in a better manner in future.

A single plunge enables a diver to secure five or six oysters; sometimes seven or eight, but rarely more. The boats which attend them are managed by rowers, or are secured by an anchor or a stone fastened to a rope.

The most prudent course is to be as little encumbered as possible, that they may more easily avoid the sharks and dog-fish. They are generally armed with a short pointed stick made of hard wood. A "lookout" is in each boat to give a signal to those under water.

The gangs of younger divers divide into three parties, and rest for longer periods. They go to their labor fasting. When below, they of course snatch the oysters up as quickly as possible, using the short stick, when necessary, to separate them from any other substance. Finding an oyster likely to contain a pearl, the stick is sometimes used to open it, and the diver will reappear, saying that, during three minutes' immersion, he could discover nothing but shells. When the fraud is discovered the stick is freely used on the head and back of the cheat.

There are two ways of treating the oyster. One is by opening it with a knife. This is preferred by those who have time and money, and the most beautiful pearls are so obtained. The operation is performed by children and old women, under sharp superintendence.

The second method is to bury the oyster, till, from putrefaction of the fish, the shells open themselves, when the pearls are taken from them one by one and thrown into a wooden trough. The shells to which pearls adhere are put aside together.

The Indians greedily feed on what has been consigned to the trough. Serious maladies, which often prove fatal, thence arise.

So awfully potent is the stench caused by heaps of putrefying oysters, that the author we quote says:

"At a distance of more than a league from the coast a blind pilot could safely carry a ship to the port of Pichilingue, guided solely by his nose."

Expert divers, who pursue their trade without mechanical assistance, are also to be met with in the Mediterranean. These are the coral-finders, men who risk their lives for a few shillings a day, and who go through terrible dangers to find those bright-colored ocean treasures so dear to females in general.

The mode of fishing for coral is so much like the process that we have just described, while speaking of the pearl-divers, that it would be useless to go over the same ground again.

The Barbary coast furnishes the dark-red coral, the Sardinian the yellow, or salmon-colored, and the coast of Italy the rose-pink. Torre del Greco, near Naples, is the residence of many of the daring coral-fishers, and the place from which boats are fitted out for the business.

Until within a very short time the whole of the coral-fishing business was carried on by men who simply stripped to their shirts, and, with an iron tool in their hands, plunged under water and searched for the coveted treasure. I need scarcely say that the Mediterranean is not the only part of the globe in which the coral-divers practice their trade. Coral is found in nearly every country in the world.

At one period, in the lower Devonians, there were three coral reefs of great extent over the Mississippi basin, and along the northern shores of New England; and the corals of those old reefs may be now seen making the old reef rock at the falls on the Ohio, near Louisville, and near Lake Memphremagog, in northern Vermont.

Unmistakable coral rocks of recent production are met with in the islands of the Pacific and Indian Oceans, sometimes hundreds of feet above the level of the sea. Needless to say that these specimens are not of much value, the Mediterranean coral being the only valuable species.

(To be continued.)

WILD ROSE AND VIOLET;

Or,

Fun at Mrs. Hawk's.

CHAPTER XV.

[Continued from page 94.]

"OH, dear, phew!" she exclaimed, with a slight olfactory shudder. "They might have been a little fresher, my Antoine," she murmured.

Milly had the greatest difficulty in the world to prevent an explosion of laughter as the sentimental speaker placed the bouquet in water.

Having done this, she returned again to the pink note.

"How pleadingly he writes," she said, tenderly, as she read the words 'Come to me, my loaf.' "But where am I to go? Where is he to be met with?"

"I should think at the spot where the bouquet and note were found," returned Milly.

"Where was that?" inquired Priscilla, very eagerly.

"At the park wall, beyond the plantation," Milly answered; "near the spring."

"Sweet, secluded spot," sighed Priscilla. "Admirably adapted for lovers' meetings. But dare I venture?"

"Dare? I should think so," said Milly, assuringly. "Why not?"

"I fancied—I might not be—a—quite prudent; and then my sister and mamma. Should they discover my secret. Oh!"

"How are they to know anything about it?"

"True; how? I am sure you would not betray me."

"Never!" exclaimed Milly, vehemently.

"No, no. I am sure you would not, my sweet girl," said Priscilla; "and after all, I don't think there could be much danger. The count is—must be—a gentleman."

"Certainly, and though he has neither money in his pocket nor soles on his boots——"

"What of that? He's a gentleman still, I will go to him. He shall at least know there is one gentle heart that sympathises with his sorrows. I will go."

"Had you not better write first? Milly suggested; "write to say how you pity him, and ask him to make an appointment. Then there can be no mistake.

"I will take your advice," she said; "but how is he to get the letter?"

"I will put it in the same place where his own note was found, and he will be sure to find it."

"And answer it, you think?"

"I feel sure he will."

"Then I will write at once."

Priscilla at once commenced her task.

With nervous trepidation she placed her pen upon the paper and wrote:

"PERSECUTED BUT INTERESTING ANTOINE—You call upon your love to come, but you appoint neither time nor place; write again and state both. Believe me, noble sufferer, my heart deeply sympathizes with your gigantic woes, your pecuniary difficulties and the distressed state of your soles. Oh, Exile, how I long to pour over your gallant head the balm of sympathy! Write soon—and let me know when and where I shall see you, but hope deferred prove too hard for endurance, and I succumb beneath its weight.

"Yours commiseratingly and anxiously,

"YOU KNOW WHO.

"P.S.—When you write, be guarded. Wo! cannot be too cautious; use no names. You know why."

The important epistle being finished and read aloud to Milly, it was inclosed in an envelope, and addressed simply "To Antoine."

"There!" exclaimed Priscilla, with a final burst of emotion, and she placed the note in the hand of her confidant; "take it for weal or for woe; take it, and bring me back a sweetly soothing reply."

This Milly promised, providing circumstances (fate included) permitted, and the door being unlocked, the young ladies separated; Milly to entertain the Jolly Girls with the account of what had transpired, and the smitten dove—Hawk, I mean—to seek her couch and dream of Exile, with his pale face, dark eyes and soleless boots.

CHAPTER XVI.

PROMISED IN MARRIAGE.

THE day after he had placed his charge under the care of Mrs. Penelope Hawk, Benjamin Royston received a letter from the lady to the effect that it would be necessary for his niece to eschew her country attire and adopt the present fashion of society. The captain, after grunting a few moments, not so much at the expense, but at being troubled about matters of which he understood nothing, wrote back to the principal that he wished his niece, of course, to have all the rigging suitable for a young lady who was to be kept "trim and taut," and that the bill was to be sent on to him.

This permission soon produced a marvelous change in the appearance of our heroine number one. The old, rustic, short, scanty frock, and the obscene boots with their nailed soles, were speedily cast aside, and in a few days the young country girl became metamorphosed externally into quite a fashionable town-bred, ladylike person.

But this was not all. Uncle Ben, after he had posted his answer to Acton, sat pondering about his niece until he saw the beautiful, dark-eyed, daring, romping girl transformed into a lovely and accomplished young woman, and then what was to be done with her?

"I've got it!" he exclaimed, exultingly—"the very thing, and if I can only bring it to pass, I shall have no other care on earth to trouble me. I'll go at once and consult my old friend Jack on the subject; and, if I mistake not, he'll see the matter in the same light as I do."

Without losing a moment, the old sailor, full of his new idea, hastily bade his servant pack up his valise and order the carriage. In a few moments he was rattling along to pay a visit to his brother-officer.

The two nautical friends were much attracted to each other from old associations, and well matched in their tempers and dispositions, both being occasionally hasty and irritable, although ordinarily genial, jovial, kind-hearted old fellows. The particular difference between them being that Benjamin Royston was a bachelor with a niece, whilst John Targent was a widower with a son.

As soon as Uncle Ben had lit his cigar and poured himself out a glass of wine he commenced at once upon the subject uppermost in his thoughts, this being, of course, his niece; how he had taken her at last under his care, and placed her at a boarding-school at Acton, and what a dear, charming girl she was.

To all this his friend Jack listened very good-humoredly, and with much interest.

"You ought to be proud of such a pretty little creature, Ben," he said.

"So I am, Jack; so I am," Ben replied; "but then I've been thinking; I shan't live for ever."

"I suppose not. It isn't to be expected."

"No, and then comes the thought," Captain Royston's voice faltered a little as he continued, "who will protect poor Rose after I'm gone?"

"The same Providence, my dear old friend, that protected her from the hour of her birth up to the present moment," replied Captain John, in a cheery, trustful tone.

"Yes, yes, I believe so; I quite believe it," answered Uncle Ben; "but for all that I should be happier if I left her in charge of some kind, earthly guardian. Rosie's a pretty girl, a very pretty girl; and you know, Jack, the world's a very dangerous sea for even the best to navigate."

"That's true," admitted his friend; "what a pity we couldn't make sailors of all the pretty girls, and send 'em to sea; they'd be safe, then."

"So they would, certainly," returned Captain Royston; "the only difficulty would be that I don't believe they would ever learn to obey the word of command."

"On second thoughts, I don't think they would, myself," said Captain John; "and after all, girls were not made to be sailors; and with respect to your niece, friend Ben, I should think, from the description you give of her, it's not unlikely she'll be picked up in course of time by some smart cruiser, and safely anchored in the port of a husband's heart, with a wedding ring for a cable."

"That's just what I wish to see, Jack," cried Captain Royston, excitedly; "that's the very thing I want to happen; that's what I've come here to consult you about."

"Ma'am!" cried Captain Targent; "you surely don't wish me to marry your niece?"

"You? No, no," replied Uncle Ben, hastily; "it's not you, but your son Harry, I've set my heart upon for my Rosie."

Captain Targent shook his head as he returned, almost bitterly:

"My son Harry!"

"Yes, Jack; you had a son Harry, hadn't you?"

"I don't know, I'm sure," returned the old sailor, in an impatient, fretful tone; "and I—I don't care."

"Why, my dear Jack," Royston exclaimed, "what's the matter that you speak of your boy in this manner? You always described him to me as one of the finest fellows in the world."

"So he is," returned the father, abruptly.

"Then what have you to complain of!—a handsome, dashing, gallant——"

"Yes, yes!" interrupted Captain John; "he's all that; he's a fine young fellow, but——"

He paused and shook his head again.

"But what? Is he heartless?"

"No, no, no, my dear friend; I can't say that he's so bad as that."

"Profligate, then, dissipated—extravagant?"

"No!" replied Targent, with a little hesitation; "I can't say he's any of these, either."

"Very well, then, let him marry Rosie when the proper time arrives," exclaimed Benjamin Royston.

"Heaven forbid!" returned his friend, emphatically; "he's not fit to marry."

"Why not?" demanded Uncle Ben, in astonishment.

"Because he's a rover—a rolling stone!" cried Captain John, passionately; "because he'd run away from the prettiest wife in the world in less than a month."

"I don't think he'd wish to run away from my Rosie," said Royston.

"He has run away from me!" cried Captain Targent, starting up fiercely, and dashing down his cigar in his irritation; "and if a young man will run away from his father he's quite as likely to run away from his wife."

Uncle Ben did not quite coincide with his old friend on this point, and after a few moments the captain seemed a little ashamed of his recent petulance.

"Give me your hand, Ben," he cried; "I've been smoking a fool of myself."

He grasped the outstretched hand that was readily offered, and continued:

"Heaven knows I do not wish to depreciate my own flesh and blood, but my son Harry grieves me dreadfully."

"How so, Jack."

"He is so wild!"

"Oh, but he's young, and will listen to reason. I'll talk to him; we'll both talk to him."

"Umph!" returned Captain Targent; "you'll have to find him first."

"Find him! What, then, is he not at home?" inquired Uncle Ben, in surprise.

"No, confound the fellow! he never is at home!" growled Captain John.

"But I suppose you have some idea of his whereabouts if you want him particularly?"

"Not the least in the world," snapped the irritated father; "I do not want him particularly, but he's never to be found when he's wanted; and it would be just the same if he had a wife, she'd never be able to find him."

"But Harry will grow tired of this wandering life before long," remarked Benjamin Royston; "how long has he been away?"

"More than six months—nearly seven," was the irritable reply.

"But how does he live? I suppose he writes to you for supplies?"

"No, he doesn't. I haven't heard from him at all during that time. I might have been dead over and over again for what he'd cared, the ungrateful villain! or—or——" again the old man's voice faltered as he added—"he might be dead himself; how do I know?"

Captain John was deeply chagrined at his son's conduct, and his friend felt that he needed a little cheering, so he said:

"Come, come, take heart, Jack—take heart! You know it's a long lane that has no turning. To tell you the truth, I have every confidence that your Harry will turn out all you could wish. Young men are not always the worse for being a little wildish. I know I was so myself, and see what a steady old dog I've got to be at last."

Captain Targent shook his head.

"I tell you what it is, old friend," said Uncle Ben. "I'm so confident that your son will prove himself worthy of his father, that I'm perfectly willing—if you have no objection—to look upon him as my niece's future husband."

"There's nothing in the world I should like better, my dear Ben," replied Captain John, warmly; "but I shouldn't like him to break the girl's heart."

"No fear of that—no fear," returned Uncle Ben, confidently. "It seems to me Rosie would be just the kind of wife your boy wants. She'd cure him of his rambling fits in no time."

"I hope so," resumed Captain John, "how do we know that they would take a fancy to each other?"

"I'll allow no objections on the part of my niece!" exclaimed Benjamin Royston, bringing down his hand on the table with an expressive bang that set all the glasses ringing again; "understand that perfectly. What I do for her good, and when I say to her, 'You're to marry Harry Targent,' take my word for it she'll marry him. You must be as firm in this matter as I am, and you will witness the best results, I'm sure."

"So I will, Ben, so I will," returned Captain John, catching his friend's enthusiasm.

This determination being duly registered by a hearty shake, the friends passed a few days together very jovially, and when Captain Royston went to sea again he felt that if he never lived to return his niece would not be left without a protector.

CHAPTER XVII.

PET MAKES MISCHIEF.

ON the morning after Miss Priscilla's note had been indited, Milly Westlake placed the billet in the cavity which the exiled count had appointed as "ze poss offeece."

Several days passed, and still the epistolary comforter remained untouched.

Priscilla was quite chagrined.

"He has forgotten me," she cried, in a mingled tone of anguish and annoyance; "the deceitful wretch has forgotten me!"

But at length, nearly a fortnight from the date of its composition, one morning Milly came hurrying in with the joyful intelligence:

"It's gone!"

"Kind Fate, I thank thee!" exclaimed the delighted Priscilla, clasping her hands and turning up her eyes after the manner of grateful dramatic heroines; "the cavity, tardy Antoine, how long hast thou lingered!—how very long!"

Milly suggested that Antoine might possibly have sent his boots to be soled and have been detained a prisoner in his back attic until they were sent home.

There was much comfort in this natural and simple idea, though it was—alas!—fallacious.

The fact was, the noble refugee, finding himself after the subscription the possessor of two pounds and sundry shillings, had rushed recklessly into dissipation.

In order to quiet his landlady, he had paid one week of his arrears of rent.

The count ate and drank, laughed and talked, became exceedingly jovial, and speedily intoxicated.

The result being that the illustrious personage was committed for ten days to the House of Correction.

But of this no one at Acton knew anything.

Time rolled on, and the noble exile being released from confinement, and having spent all his money, his thoughts turned fondly toward the ivy-clad wall and his "loaf," and he determined to pay a visit to the lonely lane and see if there was any answer to his billet-doux.

With much satisfaction he discovered that there was.

"Ha, ha!" he chuckled, after having deciphered the contents, "sis vill do, Antoine. You shall make your fortune. You shall no more vant to play ze concertina in ze streets for long time. No, no!"

Having thus expressed himself, with a pencil he scrawled the following reply:

"*Belle Inamorata*—I 'ave onlee jom receive your *lettre charmante*. For ten long day I 'ave been confine to ze 'ouse, ver mosh *malade*. I ketch a coal in my rite eye through a crack in ze vinder-pain, vich pane me terrible, terrible; zen my ladies have turn me into ze *my chambre*, an' seize upon all *mes habits*, my close, an' my boots for rent. Oh! I am moe' persecute, an' still my remittance 'ave not arrive from Paris. I cannot come to my loaf, becos ze door is lock, an' even if 'e vos unlock, I vos not to go out in. It break my 'eart, bote vot can I do? *Helas!* sis life of miseree I can no longair endure, so I shall put to my brain a peastool load to ze muzzel vis shorta an' blow out my 'ead. *Zis is my last adoo. Farewell, belle inamorata.* Your broken-'earted bote loving

"YOU NO 'OO.

"P.S.—Six pound ten vould save; bote where can a pawore exile vinout *l'eau* look for even zat paltree sum? No; I moos dye. I go now to load ze peastool. Rite me von sweet vord zat I may reed it before I pull ze triggair. Adoo!"

Miss Priscilla perused the harrowing epistle and was seized with horror at the desperate staff to which the hapless exile was reduced.

"And must he die?" she exclaimed, sadly—"die, when the sum of—a—let me see, how much is it?—six pounds ten——"

She broke off suddenly.

"It's a great deal of money, certainly," she murmured, "but then he will die without it. Six pounds ten would save him, so I—I suppose he must have it. Oh, yes, yes; he shall have the sum he requires, and when his remittances arrive from Paris his noble nature will doubtless prompt him to repay me."

The money placed in an envelope, accompanied by a few tender words, was soon conveyed to the "poss offeece" in the wall.

The hungry chevalier, who waited in ambush, pounced upon it as soon as Milly's back was turned like a spider on a fly.

How he exulted over it! How quickly he transferred the coins to his pocket, and then scribbled a hasty response, which he deposited in the usual place, and was soon hastening back to town in a state of the highest exultation.

The deluded fair one was much disappointed at the extreme brevity with which the count expressed his thanks.

The words were these:

"BELLE P.—I joss rite to say I send messengaire you no vhere, an' 'e bring me you know vhat. Macee—manee tanks. Look out for me soon at ze ole spot; you no vich. From your loaf,

"YOU NO 'OO."

"P.S.—When I seam it will be ven mie covair se earth in 'er dark mantel. You no vhy."

This matter-of-fact statement was extremely unsatisfactory to the fair donor, and she vowed the illustrious scribbler was an impostor, and threw the fragments of the note out of the window, threatening in her indignation to give the noble exile into custody for obtaining money under false pretences.

The pieces fell in a shower on the head of Pet the page, who quietly collected them and carried them away with him for special investigation.

Milly Westlake had some difficulty in restraining her visible emotions, and also in soothing the feelings of the irritated Priscilla.

But as her *confidante* suggested to her that the chevalier was doubtless suffering from conflicting emotions, the chagrined maiden calmed down, and began to think she had misjudged the unfortunate exile, and she burst forth sentimentally:

"I have wronged thee, my Antoine; but my heart whispers to me that we shall meet ere long. Then, oh, then, I will entreat thy pardon for having doubted even in thought the truthfulness and generosity of thy noble nature."

The fair penitent wrote, in order to compose her feelings, these few lines:

"DEAR ANTOINE—I rejoice that you received the you know what. Still, I am devored with anxiety on your account, and shall have no rest till we meet. I shall watch for you every night when the pale moon lights up the azure sky—you know where. Haste thee. Oh, hasten to me, noble stranger, to your loving "YOU KNOW WHO."

This brief epistolary message was also placed in the hole in the wall.

In the meantime, Pet, having retired to his usual place of meditation—the cothouse where his duties of boot and knife cleaning were performed, proceeded to put the particles of the fragments of note together; but it required a considerable amount of mental effort to decipher the hieroglyphical characters traced upon it.

But from its general tenor he judged that Miss Priscilla Hawk had a lover whom she was accustomed to meet at certain times, and that this lover was kept a profound secret.

Having determined upon his course of conduct, the conspiring Pet carefully collected the pieces, and, having wrapped them in a piece of paper, went in search of the younger of the Hawk *fillies*.

He soon found her in a retired part of the garden.

Prudence, from one or two trivial circumstances she had noticed, had a suspicion that her sister was in possession of some secret which she was keeping from her, and this thought was gall and wormwood to the young girl.

When, therefore, she observed the page approaching in a furtive and stealthy manner, artfully assumed for the occasion, she instantly anticipated some wonderful revelations, and was not in the least surprised when he requested in a mysterious whisper to be allowed a word or two with her.

Consent having been readily given, Pet commenced.

"You'll excuse me askin' such a question, miss, but are you expectin' to receive a—a pistol or anything or that sort from any one?"

The young lady looked at her questioner in blank amazement, as she echoed:

"A pistol from any one? Gracious me, what a question! Pet, are you not?"

"You're quite sure, miss? Nothink in the shape of a 'pistolary o'munecration o' some sort?" repeated Pet.

A new light suddenly burst in upon Prudence Hawk.

"You mean an epistolary communication—a letter?" she exclaimed, eagerly.

"Yes, o' course I do; a letter—ernonymouse."

"Well, I really—that is—I think I—a—a—I'm not certain," stammered the fair speaker, blushing crimson under the inquisitorial eye of the small page, who never for an instant removed his gaze from her face, or even winked an eyelid, until he had arrived at a full solution of his doubts.

Being at length quite satisfied on the point, he said, in a tone of assurance:

"You do expect a letter, then?"

"How do you know?" asked the embarrassed maiden, after a moment.

"Becos," returned the youth, in a deeply significant tone, "I've found a sort of letter addressed to 'Belle P.,' and I thought as your name was Prudence, it might be for you."

"Where is it? Let me gaze upon it!" she exclaimed, excitedly.

"Here," replied Pet, as he spread out the torn pieces before the young lady's eyes.

She devoured them eagerly.

"It is—it must be!" she cried aloud, after reading them; "where did you find them?"

"Your sister Priscilla tore the letter up and threw th' bits out o' 'er bedroom winder, an' I picked 'em up," explained Pet.

"It is from my mysterious unknown," murmured Prudence, "and it is meant for me. Oh, yes! for, does it not commence, '*Belle P.*,' and what can be intended by that but beautiful Prudence? Oh, there is no doubt of it; and my sister has me told kept it from me, presumptuously arrogating the preference of the noble exile to herself. But we shall see! I will watch. I will be lynx-eyed in my vigilance. Pet will assist me. I can trust him. Yes, false sister, in the injured Prudence you have a rival who will rival Argus in her untiring scrutiny!

If you receive letters, I shall know it. Wherever you go to keep an assignation I shall be on your track, following you as closely as your shadow."

Pet having promised all the assistance he could render, the young lady returned to the house to meditate further in her chamber.

Priscilla had kept solitary vigil every evening for the absent Antoine in the vicinity of the park wall.

The moon gave but little light, but sufficient to enable the acute page to discern the form of the elder Miss Hawk, as, shrouded in her cloak and veil, she glided across the playground, tremblingly

Little did she dream that the Jolly girls—unable to endure the idea of missing all the fun—were there also, posted behind some giant elms at a short distance off.

On the fourth night the desires of the watchers, in one respect at least, were to be gratified.

and fretful tone; "why dost thou tarry thus? Why dost thou not come?"

As she uttered this anxious inquiry, a considerable rustling and crackling became audible in the ivy.

The strong-minded maiden started and looked nervously around her. Could it be the count at last?

DIVING, PAST AND PRESENT.—THE PEARL FISHERY IN MEXICO.—SEE PAGE 106.

CHAPTER XVIII.

EXIT EXILE.

A FEW days passed, during which both the injured Prudence and the indefatigable Pet kept a strict but secret watch.

opened the gate, and passed through to the solitary trysting-place.

Little did she imagine, as she waited nervously under the ivy-covered wall, that a rival—that rival her own sister—was there also, attended by the faithful page.

Priscilla Hawk had been waiting for more than an hour.

Nine o'clock struck from the clock of the neighboring church, and still no signs of the much-longed-for exile.

"Oh, Antoine!" she exclaimed, in a shivering

The crackling continued, interspersed with sundry puffings and blowings, as of a person undergoing a considerable amount of corporal exertion.

Surely the momentous moment had arrived.

Yes, undoubtedly it had; for at the same instant a figure appeared on the top of the wall.

WILD ROSE AND VIOLET.—"THE CHEVALIER, HAVING CONTINUED AS LONG 'EN POSITION' AS HE DEEMED EFFECTIVE AND SALUTARY TO THE KNEES OF HIS LIGHT TROWSERS, EXCLAIMED: 'MA BERLE PRESCEILA! AT LAST I COAM TO YOU!'"—SEE PAGE 107.

Priscilla uttered an exclamation, and essayed to fly from the spot; but a spell was on her feet, and she moved not.

"It is he!" she faltered.

"Eet ees 'er!" cried the figure, as he came crashing down through the ivy, and advanced toward the trembling fair one.

It was the count at last, who at once threw himself on his knee, and, with chivalrous gallantry, encircled her delicate waist with his arm.

It was a moment of intense interest, not only to the fair Priscilla, but to all the watchers—for, especially, whose hair the jealous Prudence had, in her nervous excitement, unconsciously seized upon, and at which she was now pulling with such intensity that it required almost Spartan firmness on the part of the youth to restrain him from crying out.

The chevalier, having continued as long *en position* as he deemed effective and salutary to the knees of his light trowsers, exclaimed:

"*Ma belle* Prescecila! At last I coam to you!"

"Oh, count!" murmured the fair Hawk, making a faint effort to remove the daring exile's arm from her waist, "is it really you?"

"Oh, yes, eet ees, indeed! Shall you not turn zose lovely eyes upon me?—vill you not look at your Antoine?"

Priscilla gave an earnest, sidelong glance at the illustrious speaker through her veil, and was at once impressed by his personal appearance.

His shabby, tightly-buttoned frock coat, his crushed chapeau and cracked boots had all disappeared, and their place was supplied by a suit which, in the moonlight, at any rate, had a very imposing effect.

Priscilla observed that the count's shirt-front was profusely adorned with frills and studs, and that a massive chain dangled from the button-hole of his vest.

Also that he had rings on his short, fat fingers, and a pair of brilliant "patent-leathers" on his feet.

Then going from one extreme to the other, she noticed the glossy hat, with its *ultra* fashionable-curled brim, which reposed jauntily—a trifle too much on one side, perhaps—upon the count's head.

The circumstance of the illustrious exile's ten days' retirement having rendered it necessary that his flowing locks should be removed, he appeared now with the closest of "close crops."

But this was altogether rather an improvement than otherwise.

The generally dazzling appearance forming so strong and marked a contrast to the wretched condition in which he had so touchingly described himself to be, was an enigma to Priscilla.

Could he have expended in these external embellishments the six pounds ten she had forwarded to him?

The count must have received his remittances from Paris!

That must be it, said having adorned himself with all the elaborate display that his love could suggest, had now hastened to lay his heart and fortune at her feet, and, perhaps—joyful reflection!—to refund the six pounds ten she had advanced him in his hour of need.

"Do my loaf admire *ze tout ensemble* of 'er Antoine?" he asked, insinuatingly.

"Oh, yes," lisped Priscilla. "My Antoine's dress is in perfect taste—most perfect. It must have cost a great deal of money."

"Ah, yes; but dat ees nozing, now—nozing at all," he replied, in a tone of playful indifference.

"You received the—a—trifling amount I forwarded you?" asked the fair one.

"Oh, yes, yes! I receive 'im joss in time; joss as I ole ze peestool to my 'ead. Zat save my life."

"Oh, how I rejoice! And you were enabled to pay your rent?"

"Ah, yes."

"And—to—to—make some slight additions to your—a—wardrobe, were you not?"

"Ah, yes, I vas; I buy a sort of close."

"But," faltered Priscilla, in a tone of tender interest, "the sum you received from me could not have purchased that massive gold chain, those emerald studs, those costly rings; oh, no, it is impossible!"

The count glanced complacently at these valuable articles and shook his head in tacit assent to the remark. "Ah, I see I am right!" exclaimed the fair inquirer, "and there is only one way to account for so gorgeous a display; my Antoine has received his remittances."

"Oh, no, no," cried the noble Frenchman, with the utmost vehemence; "*Mais*, non, no remittance as yet. Bote vhat of zat?" he continued, with a sudden burst of exhilaration. "I 'ave got my loaf, an' I am 'appee."

He pressed the hand he held to his lips and went on:

"Bote vhy do she covare 'er face viz 'er vail? Vill she not permit 'er Antoine to gaze upon 'er *beauté*? to bask in ze sonshine of 'er *beaux yeux gris*?"

"It would scarcely be prudent, count," she replied, with the most engaging modesty; "at this early stage of our a—a—acquaintance."

"Why not?" he eagerly exclaimed. "Are ve not unite in ze bons of loaf? Coam, zen, unvail zat beautiful face an' let me vhisper in your ear zat I shall von day r-r-ron away viz you to *la belle France*, to my countree; an' zen put upon your fingare ze wedding-ring, an' make you a *comtesse*."

"Coam to my 'eart, *ma belle* Prese——"

He stopped short and uttered a cry of dismay.

"Oh *double!* vot ees zis?" he almost shrieked, recoiling in evident horror from his *inamorata*, and extending his arms, as if to prevent her approach; "zat face! zat nose! *Oh, horrible—exorable!*"

This was an awful drop for Priscilla, but the strong mind of the fair damsel did not fail her.

"What do you mean, sir?"

"Vhy, I mean zat eet ees not you I vant at all. You are not my loaf, but somebodee else. I vant my loaf! go away—go away!"

The disappointed exile turned round, and would have set the example by making a precipitate retreat, had not the insulted maiden seized his coat-tails, and clung to them pertinaciously.

"Stay, sir!" she exclaimed.

There was a sudden jerk, and a sharp sound of stitches cracking, but the garment did not give way, and the count was held fast.

"Let me go—let me go!" he cried.

"Never!" returned the incensed Priscilla, "until you return me my six pounds ten."

"Oh, eet ees impossible!" exclaimed the count, in a tone of anguish. "Vhy can I give back ze monnee vhat I 'ave spend?"

"I will have it!" insisted the infuriate damsel, transferring her grasp from the tail to the collar of the coat, which she shook in the most approved style of feminine violence; "and if you do not instantly refund the amount I shall give you into custody as a rogue and a swindler!"

Here followed another shaking, when the count vociferated:

"No, no, no! eet ees all von grand mistake. Ze demoiselle vhat I loaf is beauteeful as un *ange*. You are not beautiful. Ugh! no, *pas du tout!*"

The excited nobleman trembled vividly as he uttered these words, and the enraged Priscilla was about to administer a fitting chastisement on her prisoner with her nails, when Prudence rushed to the rescue.

"Priscilla, I'm surprised at you!" she exclaimed. "Release that noble gentleman."

This unexpected appearance caused the elder Hawk *fille* to relax her grasp, and the count, finding himself free, threw himself at the feet of his rescuer.

"Ah, zis ees my loaf, my true loaf!" he cried, fervently, clasping both the hands of Prudence, whom he mistook for the object of his adoration; "she is coam to save 'er *pauvre exile*."

"Yes, noble stranger, I will save you," replied the junior Hawk.

"Priscilla," she continued, addressing her sister, "you hear this gentleman confess his love for me. Retire, then, and cease this unavailing contest."

"I shall not retire, miss," returned her elder sister, "until I receive six pounds ten shillings from that vile impostor there."

She made a hasty advance for the purpose of recapturing the coat-collar she had relinquished, when Prudence intercepted her.

"Forbear, forbear!" she cried; "younger sister as I am, weak as I may be, I will yet interpose in defense of the man who loves me."

As she uttered this femininely-chivalrous determination, she threw aside her vail and turned her face on the count.

To her horror, however, instead of rushing toward her, he uttered a cry of dismay and staggered back.

"Ugh! o-h!" he groaned, in a tone of mingled irration and despair; "*ze* ees anozare meestake; eet ees not you, *netaire*."

"Not me?" gasped Prudence, turning all manner of colors. "Do—do—you mean to—to—tell me—you per—er—jured monster—that you do not l—love me?"

"Yes, I do!" shouted the count. "I mean to say I don't loaf neizair of you."

This reckless confession was as a spark to a train of gunpowder, and the two injured demoiselles pounced upon the excited chevalier like a pair of tigresses.

"Perjurer!—villain!—traitor!—false one!" were the exclamations that flew from their lips.

"Bote 'ear me, ladees, onlee 'ear me!" protested the refugee, who began to think his position dangerous.

He appealed in vain. The infuriate Hawks had the luckless exile fast by his coat-collar, and seemed more inclined to tear him to pieces than anything else.

It was now the Jolly Girls' turn to take part in this little sensational drama.

They advanced, and shouted with one voice:

"Hold!"

The Misses Hawk, startled at this imperative injunction, turned their heads, when they were greeted by a second exclamation of well-assumed surprise from their pupils.

CORNELIUS VANDERBILT.—VANDERBILT PROPOSING TO HIS MOTHER TO PLOW TEN ACRES FOR A HUNDRED DOLLARS.—SEE PAGE 110.

CORNELIUS VANDERBILT.—YOUNG VANDERBILT RACING WITH A SLAVE BOY.

The glowing words of the enthusiastic alien were not without their effect upon the romantic and ambitious Priscilla. The prospect before her exceeded even her wildest hopes.

"Do you really love me?" she asked, coyly.

"Do I loaf you? Oh, vot a question!"

"And will you always love me, Antoine?" she sighed.

"Oh, yes, yes, of course, always; nevair shall I loaf so von else! Zerefore, remove zat vail an' saffare your lovair to print a kiss upon your leeps."

The chevalier had made several efforts to remove the covering that concealed the features of the cautious maiden before him, which her fair fingers had with becoming reserve persistently clutched; but as the brilliant future painted so glowingly by the eloquent exile banished her scruples, her grasp relaxed. In an instant the envious lace was snatched away by the eager fingers of the count, who exclaimed, joyously:

"Miss Priscilla—Miss Prudence—Is it possible!" they cried.

"It is!" sternly replied those ladies; "and we are determined to give this impostor into custody for the deceit he has practiced."

The count, who at once recognized Miss Grey, burst out enthusiastically:

"Aha! zere ees my loaf—zere ees *ma belle ange*, viz ree dark tresses an' ze *beaux yeaux gris*."

He pointed with violent gesticulations to Constance.

"Oh, my poor little count!" she exclaimed, dolefully; "he'll be torn to pieces! Oh, release him this time, pray do! Let him go back again over the wall to his illustrious ancestors."

But the Hawks were inexorable, and would not release the noble delinquent.

"We really can't see him consigned to a dungeon," Constance continued, in an heroic strain. "No, let us strike for France and Exile."

The Jolly Girls echoed the cry, and looked eagerly for some portion of the count's garments upon which they might grab a hold.

The Hawk Men having already taken possession of the collar, all the remaining party could avail themselves of were the coat-tails.

Upon these they seized, and the tug of war began.

In vain he called "Murdare!" the tugging process still continued.

The agile page, who was in an ecstasy of delight, hovering near, and dropping in, as often as he could, with a corking pin, with which he attended to the calves of the "illustrious."

In the course of a few moments the three-and-sixpenny massive gold chain was wrenched asunder, the frills of the snowy shirt-front hung in tattered shreds, the glossy new *chapeau*, with which Pet had had a short but effectual game at football, was reduced to a shapeless pulp; and when at length the imposing chevalier was dragged from the grasp of the indignant Hawks, he was reduced to a complete wreck.

Bewildered, tattered and torn, he glared in a hopeless manner at the jolly bevy of tormentors, and Constance Grey took the opportunity of whispering in his ear:

"Now, count, we have rescued you from your impending late this time. There's the wall, and if you will be advised by me, you'll get over it as quickly as possible, and never show your face here any more."

"My 'eart vill break!" he murmured, dolefully; "but *helas*, I suppose I'd bettare go."

"Most decidedly; and don't come back again," was the consoling reply he received.

"You'd better take your 'at, *mounseer*," sang out the obliging Pet, as he threw the battered mass after the retreating chevalier.

The poor of France picked it up, ground his teeth, and shook his clinched fist fiercely at the ironical youth, who advised him in a friendly manner not to excite "'eself."

Then plunging into the ivy, he clambered hastily up the wall, and, dropping into the lane on the other side, was seen no more.

Thus ended this romantic dream.

To the Jolly Girls, who had long since learned to doubt the genuine quality of the illustrious exile, the whole affair had been a capital joke.

But to the romantic Hawks it had been quite a blow, and it took them a long time to recover from the shock their nervous sensibilities had received.

(To be continued.)

"Wild Rose and Violet" was commenced in No. 644.

EASY LESSONS IN PHONOGRAPHY, OR SHORT-HAND.

IF you have had any difficulty in making any of the single or joined letters, so far, let us know, and we will answer as soon after as possible.

Ish (sh) is generally written downward; Shay (sh) upward; Ar (r) is written downward; Ray (r) upward; Lay (l) upward, and commences a word; but if the vowel comes before it in the spelling, El (l) is written instead, and downward. The circle S (ss) may either commence, occur in the middle, or at the end of a word. It also stands for Z. The words in which it happens will not be confounded, as there is but little difference in the sound. Ch(ay) is always written downward, and a little more straight up than S(ay), which is always written upward and slanting to the right. If you try it you will notice how natural it is for you to make the distinction. G(ay) is the only letter that does not come under the rule that all the heavy letters are to be written downward, and that, of course, like all other horizontal letters, is to be written from left to right. Make your heavy signs heavy enough to show the difference between the light and heavy ones, and let them taper from and to a fine point gradually. Do not shake off your pen or pencil between the letters in joining them. Double straight strokes should be made the full length of two single ones, as tt, kg, etc.

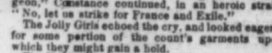
In reading the joined signs, commence with the letter on the left and top, thus: t-ch, not rt. H(ay) is always written upward. S-h (not sh) is made with the hook part of H changed into a circle.

We trust you may understand the remarks without giving you engraved examples in all cases. H(ay) and S(ay) are both written in the same direction.

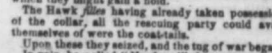
Now we give you a Vowel Scale, which you must learn before you begin to make up words. The straight up t sign in this table has no value as a letter, and is used only to show the *place* of putting the vowel, *first*, *second* and *third* place.

The regular vowels, a, e, i, o, u, are not sufficient for all the sounds of the language, so they are left out in the cold for the present, and the following, with the rest that will appear in our two next, are substituted:

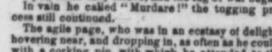
LONG VOWELS.



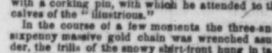
as in eat, ate, art, aught, oat, food



ate ache aim eel awl ear oar



tea key may lay law raw row



pour poor sheep shape four shave school

In like manner, write, and read aloud as you write: Ape, ope, pa, paw, ate, ought or aught, oat, taw, to or toe, too, age, jay, jaw, Jes, Jew, ache, oak, key, caw, coo, be or bee, bay, bow or beau, each, chaw, chew, choose, me, ma, maw, mew, own, oath, ace, all or ale, all, lo, lieu, toe, she, Shad, shawl, shoe, eve, we, way, woe, woo, ye, yea, you.

This out shows the vowels that occur in very many words of the language, and are called the *long* vowels. Study the *power* of each vowel sign, by reference to the word underneath it, until you can detect the long vowels in any other word you may read. The exercise will also improve your pronunciation of words.

The long sound of *e* is placed in the beginning of every letter, in the *first* place, either *before or after* the letter; the *a* sound is put in the middle, or *second* place, before or after the letter; and the *oh* sound in the *third* place, before or after. So with the *au*, *o*, *oo*. Placed before the letter or letters, the vowel is read first; placed after, it is read after; placed *above* a horizontal letter, the vowel is read first; placed *under* the letter, it is read after.

If you commence the making of the letters from the top down, you begin to place the vowels from the top; if the letter is slanting and upward, you reckon the positions from the bottom, or where you commenced.

The stroke vowel signs must be written at right angles to the letter to which it belongs.

The double vowel letters must be pronounced together, as *au* (awe), not a-u, oo (as in food), not double oo.

The letters must be made first, and the vowels put in afterward.

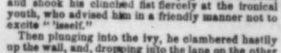
Take all the consonants you can in our circular out of last week, beginning with p or t, *one at a time*, and write the first place vowel *e before* it, until you go all round the circle. Then take the same consonants, one by one, and place the same first vowel *e after* it, until you complete the circle again. Then take the *second* vowel sound *a* and use it in the same manner. In every case be sure to *sound* the letter and vowel together, whether it happens to make a word or not. This will give you plenty of exercise, interesting and instructive. If necessary, get some one to show you how to commence.

Then pick out all the words you can in this reading matter, which contain one or more long vowel-sounds, and if they have no sound different from those in the words under the above scale, write them on paper, first the English word, and under it the Phonographic consonant outline, with the vowel properly placed.

Don't be alarmed at the task. The first principles are always the hardest, but the art becomes easier as you learn to understand it.

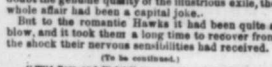
Taking it for granted that you have learned the rules for writing the long vowels according to the scale, in proper position, first, second, or third place, heavy dot or heavy dash, before or after the letters, we proceed to give you the scale of

SHORT VOWELS.

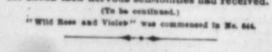


as in it get hat got but foot

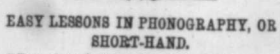
or, more simply, without reference to words, but sounds: ĭ, ĕt, ăt, ŏt ut, oot.



pit pet pat top tap rich chap



fellow berry merry marry lively Sunday Monday



Mary Johnnie Sammy Thomas Billy Joseph Ella

You will see the short vowels follow the same arrangement of the long vowels in position, are somewhat alike in shape and sound, only the short vowels are more quickly and more lightly spoken.

Study this table also until you can pick out the words in the reading matter of any paragraph or column in FRANK LESLIE'S BOYS' AND GIRLS' WEEKLY, whether the words contain long or short vowels, or *both*, and by the aid of your acquaintance with the full Alphabet, and vowels of both kinds, write them all in correct phonographic (short-hand) characters, and without much time to study over it.

The t sign before which the short vowels in the table are placed, like the same sign in last week's table, has no value as a letter, but is to show the relative positions of the vowels to *any* consonant, whether written before or after, at the beginning, in the middle, or end of a letter or letters.

Referring to the table when necessary, copy, and read as you write, the above exercise with the short vowels.

In like manner write, and read aloud as you do so, the following words: Pick, peck, pack, pock, peach, poach, putty, tick, tack, tuck, took, touch, tip, top, tag, chick, check, cup, kept, cage, catch, cut, cod, bit, bid, biddy, budge, back, book, jot, jet, map, met, mat, Mattie, mud, muddy, must, meant, among, nothing, fish, ship, shape, shop. Some of these words you must write with three letters.

Take the reading matter in this lesson, or any other print on this page, pick out all the words you can, that have either or both sets of vowels, and write them out, first the consonant outline, then fill in the proper vowels. A great many words you will find have a kind of double vowel sound. These you can study until a more convenient season.

Now we conclude this lesson with the rule for placing the vowels, in writing words.

First position vowels (long or short) are written after the *first* consonant;

Second position vowels (*long*) are written after the *first* consonant; *if short*, before the *second* consonant.

Third position vowels (long or short) are written before the *second* consonant.

(To be continued.)

LIVE for something. Do good, and leave behind you a monument of virtue that the storms of time can never destroy. Write your name in kindness, love, and mercy on the hearts of thousands you come in contact with year by year; you will never be forgotten. No; your name, your deeds, will be as legible on the hearts you leave behind as the stars of heaven.

CORNELIUS VANDERBILT.

ALMOST every boy as he is studying away and acquiring knowledge or strengthening his body by healthy athletic sports, hopes to succeed in life.

He hopes to do something that will make his name distinguished, if not famous.

He opens new ways of trade and travel, makes some useful invention, remedies some great evil, does good service to his country in any way, he will feel proud of it.

Let us study how some famous men began. Take Cornelius Vanderbilt, who became a very rich man. If that was all, it would not be worth our while; but he was a man of great energy, and early in life set to work to improve modes of communicating between the different parts of this country and with other countries. Much of the rapid travel we now enjoy is due to him.

Cornelius Vanderbilt was born MAY 27th, 1794, on Staten Island, New York, where his father was a farmer. Cornelius was the youngest of a large family, and had apparently no great expectations. But he was quick and active. He was very fond of out-door exercise, and took to horses. He delighted in a fast horse, and many a race was run between him and a slave-boy, for we had slaves in New York in those days.

The little black fellow was a good rider, and enjoyed the sport as much as Cornelius did. He grew up, acquired some education, and became a mariner. It is to the credit of Mr. Vanderbilt that he never looked down on his early playmate, but to the end of his life welcomed him, and would chat over the early days on Staten Island.

His out-door exercise gave him strength and vigor for his after-life, and built up his constitution. A weakly boy can scarcely become a strong man.

While still young, it is related of him that, on an occasion of the loading of the cargo of a ship stranded near Sandy Hook, and its transportation to New York, he personally directed the party and successfully accomplished the task. All his thoughts at this period of his life seem to have turned to the water. His chief desire was to possess a boat of his own—the mere desire of possession being, without question, strengthened by anxiety and a noble ambition to relieve his parents of so much of their care of him as this possession might accomplish; and so it happened, after much thinking thereupon, that when less than sixteen years old, he went to his mother with a proposition. This was no less than an offer to plow, harrow and plant an eight-acre lot for one hundred dollars, with which he would purchase such a boat as he desired.

Mrs. Vanderbilt was, as is commonly the case with the mothers of great men, a woman of many remarkable and superior qualities. The proposition was accepted, and young Cornelius attacked his work.

The task, however, was too much for a lad to possibly accomplish in the time allotted, and here his shrewdness came in. Having left himself free to make use of such assistance as he might obtain, he enlisted his schoolfellows in his plan, and with their aid, laboring, however, himself to the very fullest capacity, he succeeded in accomplishing his task satisfactorily, and gained the promised prize.

Cornelius now commenced running his boat regularly to and from New York, though following in the main the business of his father.

From the beginning he gave all his day earnings and half of those of the night to his parents for his subsistence, and clothed himself with the balance. It is to be remarked that at this period of his life he neither used strong drink nor tobacco.

Such persistence and industry could not fail to have its reward. Not only was the lad enabled thus to provide for himself and relieve his parents of all expense on his behalf, but he managed to save money, and thus early developed economical ideas.

At the age of eighteen he owned two boats and was captain of a third. At the age of nineteen he married, removed to New York, and bought boats, sloops and schooners, and when twenty-three he was free from debt and worth $9,000. In 1817 he assisted in building the first steamboat ever run between New York and New Brunswick, N. J., and became captain of her at a salary of $1,000 a year. In 1818 he took command of a much larger and better boat on the same line, his wife at that time keeping the hotel at New Brunswick and making much money. In 1824 Vanderbilt had full control of the Gibbons line, and brought it up to paying $40,000 a year. In 1827 he leased for fourteen years the ferry between New York and Elizabeth, N. J., put on new boats and made it very profitable. It would be useless to follow this enterprising man through the many successful schemes and speculations of his successful water life, so we will conclude by saying that at the outbreak of the civil war he presented the Government with the steamer *Vanderbilt*, costing $800,000. During his steamship career he owned twenty-one steamers, eleven of which he built, and with steamboats, his entire steam fleet numbered sixty-six. During the greater part of this period of his life he was popularly known as the "Commodore."

When he abandoned the water in 1864 his accumulations were estimated at $40,000,000. About the year 1844 he became largely interested in railways, and from that period up to his death, January 4th, 1877, he was continually engaged in railroad enterprises.

By his will he left by far the greater portion of his wealth to his oldest son, William H. Vanderbilt, who had for years be enclosely interested with his father in the management of his enterprises.

His will was subsequently contested by one of his daughters, and the contest, which has been going on for many months, is yet unecided.

Talks with Boys about Foreign Lands.

THE BRITISH IN SOUTH AFRICA.

NO. I.

THE BOERS.

THE Cape of Good Hope was practically unknown to the civilized world until the year 1487, when it was visited by Bartholomew Diaz. In 1497 Vasco de Gama rounded the Cape on his voyage to India; but no serious attempt at settlement was made until 1650, when the Dutch East India Company established a colony for the purpose of raising provisions for their vessels to and from India. They found the country in possession of a people calling themselves Guaguas, but to whom the Dutch gave the name of Hottentots, from *hot en* (and) *tot*, two syllables of frequent occurrence in their language.

The Dutch colony for a considerable time was confined to the neighborhood of the Cape, but the limits were gradually extended, the natives being driven back or reduced to slavery. Besides the Dutch settlers there were many Germans, Flemings and Portuguese.

In 1686 there was a considerable immigration of Huguenots, who left France after the revocation of the edict of Nantes.

In 1795 the colonists attempted to free themselves from the Dutch rule, but the British Government sent a fleet, and took possession of the colony in the name of the Prince of Orange.

It was ruled by British governors till 1803, when it was restored to Holland.

Upon the renewal of the European wars in 1806, the British again took possession, and the colony was formally ceded to them in 1815. The British have had several wars with the neighboring tribes, who are generally designated under the common name of Caffres. The first was in 1811, the second in 1819, when their boundary was extended to Kei, but was soon restored to the Caffres. The third war took place in 1835, at the close of which the territory as far as the Kei River was again given up to the British, the inhabitants being declared subjects of the crown. This district formed, till 1865, the colony of British Caffraria. The fourth Caffre war lasted from 1846 to 1848; and the fifth from 1850 to 1852.

In 1820 5,000 Scotch emigrants, sent out by the Government, landed at Algoa Bay, and laid the foundations of the settlements on the eastern borders, which have since extended much further into the interior than any other, and now form the most flourishing portion of the colony. In 1834 the slaves were emancipated. The troubles with the Boers, commencing in 1835, resulted in the establishment of two independent republics bordering on Cape Colony.

A few words respecting the Boers, or Dutch colonists, of Southern Africa, are here necessary: As the influx of fresh elements from Europe diminished, the original settlers in the Cape Colony developed a peculiar character of their own. The Boers could never be reconciled to the transfer of the colony to Great Britain in 1815, and maintained a secret but constant opposition against all efforts to Anglicise the colony. After a long and useless struggle the Boers determined to emigrate and to establish in the interior an independent community. As early as 1835 the first bands crossed the Orange River, and settled, one part near the Zoospansberg (Salt-pan Mountain), and another part near Delgoa Bay, where they were soon destroyed by malignant coast-fevers. A third band, which followed later in the year, was attacked by the Matabelee Caffres, and obliged to fall back on the Modder River. Having been reinforced by other immigrants, they again advanced, repulsed the Matabelees, and finally settled in the Orange River district.

Meanwhile a small British colony had been established at Port Natal, but it was abandoned in 1836. The remaining colonists called the Boers to unite with them, and in 1837 they crossed the Guathlamba Mountain; but, at an interview with the Zooloo (or Zulu) Caffres, they were treacherously slain. The remnant of the band turned in a southerly direction, founded the settlements of Potchefstroom, Maritzburg, and defeated the Zooloos, February 1st, 1838.

In 1840 Governor Napier, by proclamation, denied their right to form an independent community, even beyond the boundaries of the British possessions.

In 1843 a small British force was landed, which compelled the Boers to retire from the coast and to accept the amnesty offered them in exchange for their recognizing the British sovereignty. Many of them, unwilling to submit, recrossed the mountains and settled in the Vaal region.

The British having possession of Natal, at once began to disturb the traditionary rights of the Boers. The consequence was that again a large portion of them migrated northward, beyond the Klipp River, then the boundary of Natal, where, for three years, unprotected by the government, they struggled against the Zooloos.

In 1845 they overcame the resistance of the Caffres, and the Colonial Government immediately proclaimed the Buffalo River as the northern boundary of Natal, thus once more subjecting the Boers to British rule. After some resistance the Boers determined to emigrate to the Vaal country. Smith, the governor-general, attempted to retain them by promising full redress of their grievances, but it was too late. The bands had already departed and settled in the vicinity of the Griquas and Bechunas; but in 1848 the Colonial Government annexed, by proclamation, the territory northward, beyond the Cape Colony, under the pretext of protecting the savage Griquas against encroachments on their territory. The Boers took to arms and drove the British garrison from Bloomfontein. But Governor Smith crossed the Orange River with a large force, and defeated the Boers near Boomplaats after a long and obstinate resistance.

The Boers, still unwilling to submit to the British, migrated to the north, beyond the Vaal River, and there founded the Transvaal Republic.

Some 12,000 Boers remained in the Orange River Country, but, although subdued by force, they preserved a hostile feeling against their conquerors. The Caffre wars, begun in 1850, made it evident that united action by the European race was necessary for safety, and in 1853 the Orange River Country was relinquished to the Boers.

On February 23d, 1854, this act was consummated, and the Orange River Republic was recognised as an independent state by England. From that time the Orange River and Transvaal Republics gained strength and power. Unhappily for this state of affairs, the British could not let them rest in peace, and on the 12th of April, 1877, Sir T. Shepstone hoisted the British flag at Rustenberg, and the Transvaal, a land equal in extent to that of France, became a portion of the British Empire. The Boers, being principally cattle-breeders, have not developed the agricultural resources of the country to any considerable extent. Coal and iron have been found in many places, and gold was discovered in 1854 on the Caledon River.

The climate is dry, temperate, and salubrious. Excellent roads communicate with Cape Colony and Port Natal. The soil, consisting of sand, clay, and loam, is more fertile than that of the Orange River Country. Its rolling prairies are covered with excellent tall grass, interspersed with shrubs and magnificent trees. In the mountainous region there are primeval forests. The climate is similar to that of Southern Europe, and all European and many tropical vegetables are raised without difficulty. The rivers, of which the country has a good number, are not navigable, and communication with the seashore is difficult.

Grasshoppers are a constant plague to the farmer, while flies and other venomous insects often destroy hundreds of cattle.

(To be continued.)

READ OUR NEW STORIES!

Floating to Fortune;
Or,
Which was the Hero.

Inventive Ben;
Or,
How a Boy Became a Jack-of-all-Trades and Master, Too,
And
Wild Rose and Violet;
Or,
Fun at Mrs. Hawk's.

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CAUTION.

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A TIGER HUNT IN OOCHIN CHINA.

(Continued from page 124.)

Then we heard the cries of the startled peacocks as they rose screaming, followed by an infernal clamor, mingled with sharp cries, tam-tam and firing, to which my elephant responded by a stunning trumpeting; which gradually died away as my driver stilled him by a few words of command.

The decisive moment was at hand. D'Arieulle motioned to me to be on the alert; I cocked my rifle as he did. The din drew nearer, and our anxiety became intense. Soon the horses began to trouble and paw the ground. My elephant stretched out his trunk toward the net—the tiger was surely coming.

Suddenly a terrible and alarming mewing resounded near us. I felt something spring on my back. I turned instantly; it was my wretched attendant, quivering with fear, and crying:

"Oh, sir, the tiger! the tiger! We're done for."

I made the fellow get back and stop choking me, as he was doing in his fright.

Exultant cries had now followed the infernal din, and I told my elephant-driver to advance a little. Then I beheld an enormous tiger poised in the air, his head and four paws caught in the net. His position was a curious one, indeed: every struggle that he made with his powerful limbs only tightened the mesh around his neck. I believe surprise, at finding himself arrested in midair had drawn from him his cry of anger rather than any actual pain. But be that as it may, we had him fast.

D'Arieulle was in ecstasies. He fired his rifle three times, the capture signal, and then we waited for Thao, who was to perform the delicate task of getting our prey down. I told John to fire as well, which he did at last, when he had convinced his cowardly heart that the tiger could not get at him.

Thao came up with his men and the Mathae, and was delighted to see his terrible enemy caught.

We had now to get down the net. This was at once a critical and dangerous operation, for a single slip might let the monster loose, and God knows what the consequences would have been. Master Thao undertook this, and accomplished it without an accident. The two lower edges of the net were first loosed and brought up over the animal, which was thus completely enveloped; it was then lowered till about six feet from the ground. Then a long wagon, prepared for the occasion, was pushed under. It had a stout wooden wall at each end eight feet high, and those were connected by a cross-timber. The wagon was in all fifteen feet long.

What was left of the net was once more wound around our captive and the net let down, the ends secured carefully to the end-walls. The tiger hung in the middle, swaying to and fro with the jolts of the wagon, like a mandarin making his visits in his hammock. The *pâquets* marched ahead, singing and dancing to the music of their extemporized tam-tams, and you can well conceive what charming music that was.

Behind the wagon came D'Arieulle and the mayor of the village, then the Spahis—the company of Mathae forming an escort in single file on each side—while I brought up the rear on my elephant.

Not far from the village, the whole population poured out to meet us. It is impossible to describe the exultant shouts, the imprecations, heaped on the tiger. I leave that to the reader's imagination. An hour later the vast assemblage was gathered in the Government Square. A courier was at once dispatched to Saigon, and we retired to rest. All were safe and sound; not an accident had marred our success. After the siesta we visited our captive. He was one of the finest tigers I ever saw—eight feet long by five high.

The admiral sent a strong cage, with stout iron bars, from Saigon, and a week later D'Arieulle and I accompanied the tiger to that capital.

Madame de la Grandière presented it to the Jardin d'Acclimatation in Saigon, and it is probably still there. Beside the cage is the inscription: "Here lie, in the body of this tiger, six Annamites. He was taken in a net at Berte, and presented to Madame de la Grandière by Monseur Mourin d'Arfeuille, Lieutenant in the Navy and Commandant of the Circle of Barta; and was presented by that lady to the Jardin d'Acclimatation of this city in 1865."

OUR LETTER-BOX.

W. S. FLINN.—We make due allowance for the time required by mail for our paper to reach each competitor and for his reply to reach us. Our endeavor is to confine the competition to those who mail their answers the day the paper reaches them.

RICHMOND VA.—A boy signing not a real name, but a vulgar nickname, asks the name of what he calls a coin, "The Flag of our Union, 1863," on one side, and so on. This is not a coin in a piece issued by Government to pass as money. A piece issued to give currency to political ideas is called a "Political Token." Its value is about one cent. Pieces issued by business men as cards are known as "store or commercial" tokens. A few of these of early dates and great rarity command a high price, but most of these "political" and "store" tokens are worth very little more than the copper in them.

THE ROUND TABLE.

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1. Mushroom—MooR, UndO, SacO, HalM. 2. Solace. Operas, Learns, Arrive, Canvas, Essues. 3. The letter M. 4. India, Ceylon, Cyprus, Malta, Tasmania, Nevis, Antigua, Bermudas. 5. Tam-a-riad. 6. Butter, Cutter, Gutter, Mutter. 7. Ivy, IV., V. 8. Catsup. 9. Harem, Aroma, Robin, Emits, Manse. 10. C, Web, Won-at, Central, Baron, Tan, L.

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1.—George H. Maxwell, 2733 Washington Street, St. Louis, Mo.

2.—Herbert Tucker, Canton, Mass.

3.—John Ehler, Prince and Orange Streets, Lancaster, Pa.

ENIGMAS, CHARADES, ETC.

1.—ENIGMA.

WHAT would you give to know my name,
Likewise the source whence I came?
You've heard me oft, but never seen
Or known the course which I have been.
No one can cause more hurt than I,
Yet o'er my work I often sigh.
Now have you guessed? Then change my sound,
And you will find I'm turning round.

2.—SQUARE WORDS.

Made of links; speed; sidewise; bits; full of news.

3.—DIAMOND PUZZLE.

A consonant; to play; pains; devices; a famous Grecian vale; to behold; a consonant.

4.—DECAPITATION.

Whole I am possessed by all
Who on this earth do live.
Change my head, and then 'tis plain
What we all need I give.

Change again, I bring to view
An aid to health, folks say.
Change once more, and then 'tis true
I'll take you far away.

5.—CHARADE.

My first, reversed, will plainly show
A liquor which our sailors know.
Reverse my second, then you'll see
The same as first, 'tis sure to be.
Along the bank of some brook stroll,
And there, I'm sure, you'll hear my whole.

6.—DOUBLE ACROSTIC.

My primals now in Africa's land,
Finals England much, we understand.

This animal roams Afric's plains;
This animal the rhinoceros explains;
This animal more real you'll find;
To ruin the means, bear in mind;
This state of bondage in every age and clime,
But in hot Africa exists from ancient time.

7.—CHARADE.

My first is an article easy to tell;
Next is of neuralgia a pretty bad spell;
For third I volunteer, so plenty is said;
For last, by your leave, I'll borrow your head.
My whole is old Time to take by the lock
Which grows on his forehead and distance the clock.

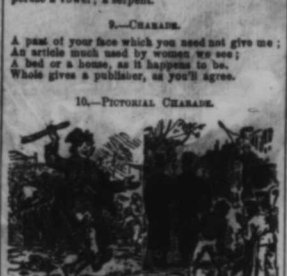
8.—SQUARE WORDS.

An animal; having ears; the staff of life; to peruse a vowel; a serpent.

9.—CHARADE.

A part of your face which you need not give me;
An article much used by women we see;
A bed or a house, as it happens to be.
Whole gives a publisher, as you'll agree.

10.—PICTORIAL CHARADE.



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Second Part. The Whole.

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IT was a very pretty figure. With one skate he drew a rough chart of the celestial phenomena, while with the other he executed quite an accurate copy of the *Herald* war-map. Then he attempted to draw four parallel lines in the air, but the wind was too strong and blew them out. Then he sat down.

THOUGH bread to mental service, I
Doughnut despise to raise
My jumbled notes in melody
In my fair sweet-tart's praise.
The baker kneads some tender flour
To love and kiss and please—
And then turn over quick as snap,
And cracker at his ease.

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A TIGER HUNT IN COCHIN CHINA.

WHILE spending some months at Saigon as a convalescent, in 1866, having injured myself severely in Upper Cambodia, I made the acquaintance of Lieutenant Mourin d'Arfeuille, of the French Navy, then commandant of the Circle of Baria, in the province of Bienhoa, or French Cochin China.

He was a hunter of the most ardent temper, and could boast of having bagged five or six tigers and a couple of elephants in his excursions through his circle.

When he burst into my room like a bombshell one morning and proposed that I should go with him to Baria, for which he was bound in all haste, and then join him in a hunt to rid his circle of an immense tiger that was ravaging the country, I jumped at the opportunity.

Admiral de la Grandière, Governor of Cochin China, had just informed him that the courier of the post had been carried off by the fierce creature, making five victims within a month. "The tigers seem to know, lieutenant," said he, "when you are absent on leave, for they keep very quiet when you are at your post. So you must be off at once, and do not forget to send this tiger-skin to Madame de la Grandière."

"You see," said the lieutenant, "I must oblige the lady, and you must join me. The mountain-air and the exercise will do you good; it is a new part of the country for you. It is settled, is it not—you will go?"

I was only too eager, but I was still in the doctor's hands.

"My dear commandant, you must let me consult Doctor Demay before I can give a positive answer."

"All right," he replied; "I am certain he will raise no objection, and when I get you to Baria I will give you an agreeable surprise."

"You wish to stimulate my curiosity, I see; but I warn you it is all in vain."

"You think so, colonel? Well! If I told you that Lieutenant Dupleix is at Baria, in command of the Spahis, we mess together, and he has often talked to me of your adventurous life, and deeds as creditable as heroic! What do you say to that?"

"I say, dear D'Arfeuille, that my good friend Dupleix is a babbler, and his friendship for me has swelled ordinary matters into deeds of high emprise; but for all that, I shall be delighted to see him again."

We soon after started in a native boat for his post.

Midway we encountered one of those sudden storms so common in Further India. But in half an hour the sun came out like a thirsty gormand eager to drink up the drops that were falling in long cascades of brilliant pearls from leaf to leaf of the aromatic trees of the tropics. With one wide sunbeam he lapped up the water from the surface of the earth, so that in half an hour it was as dry as ever. Fortunately, the wind was in our favor, and we were able to sail on rapidly, making six knots an hour, so that at nine in the evening we reached our destination.

We were received by a crowd of natives, who, talking all at once, told us that the *kouk-cop* (tiger) had carried off the courier, as we already knew, and since then an Annamite woman, raising the number of victims to six human beings, without counting cattle.

D'Arfeuille encouraged them, telling them that he had come on purpose to kill the brute, and we then made our way to the quarters, escorted by these good people, some of them lighting our way by torches of resinous wood, others carrying our baggage.

In half an hour we were installed.

Dupleix was there to welcome us. I had not seen him for two years, and he was just back from a leave of absence in France.

Next morning at seven I was awakened by the Lieutenant's gong, sounded to call in all the chief men of the neighboring Annamite villages to concert measures for a general *battue* to finish the tiger.

When the council broke up, I learned that a number of brave and steady Annamites had set out to find the tiger's trail and follow it to its lair, so as to ascertain its age, and its time of sleeping and of prowling.

The details of the courier's fate were now related to us.

Dispatches from Saigon were still sent by the system of couriers on foot, common throughout Indo-China. A courier starts from Saigon at full speed with a locked tin-box containing dispatches, the box of each circle having a lock and key of its own. This box was carried on the back by means of a strap. Each courier ran a mile, and then handed his box to another, whom he found ready, who took it and started off at a run till he reached the next courier, and so it was kept up till the designated post was reached. It was one of these poor fellows who was flying by that the tiger had pounced upon.

The day was spent in preparations of all kinds. I saw nothing of D'Arfeuille till night set in; then he made his appearance, with every mark of satisfaction.

"Ah!" he cried; "I've got the tiger!"

"You have not killed it?" exclaimed Dupleix and I in a breath.

"No, not yet; but I have found out how to capture it, for I must tell you that I do not wish to kill it, but to capture it alive. You know, D'Abain, that, before we started, the admiral rather quizzed me on the tiger question, and asked me in a bantering way for this fellow's skin for Madame de la Grandière?"

"Yes."

"Well, I am bent on taking it alive."

"How do you expect to do it?"

"In a net."

"In a net!" we both echoed.

"Yes, gentlemen, in a net. It is an idea of Thao, who assures me that it is customary to do so in Moys, a wild, woody, mountainous part of the country. I must tell you that Thao is an old Annamite, long resident here, and a famous hunter, and he has been for more than four years in my service. When I told him how I should like to catch the fellow alive, Thao told me that it was not impossible to take it in a net. He knew where to find one, and he started off to get it. As he has been gone some four hours, we may look for him any minute."

"But, honor bright, D'Arfeuille, is not this all a joke, taking tigers in nets like butterflies?" said I.

"I am not joking, I tell you, and Thao will soon be here to convince you."

D'Arfeuille was a six-footer of giant strength, though as timid as a shy schoolgirl in a parlor. In a small circle of friends he talked more freely; but in danger his real character was shown, and he rushed on with calm bravery. Thanks to a solid education, his judgment was sound.

He was loved and venerated in the province, and his subordinates regarded him more as a father than a governor.

During supper Thao came in to report that he had not found what he had gone for, but that, if the commandant would permit, he would turn us out a couple of new nets, asking for the skin of two elephants which D'Arfeuille had killed some six months previously.

The commandant, bent on taking his tiger in a net, gave the permission. In fact, I believe he would have sacrificed then and there all the skins he had taken, or expected to take, in order to get the necessary Thao nets.

Our native hunter went off in high glee. He was the commandant's chief huntsman, or Shekarry, all details of hunts being left to him, and Thao always fulfilled his duties to the entire satisfaction of his master, who never failed to reward him liberally.

The reader will easily infer that Thao was devoted heart and soul to the commandant. During the latter's absence, and before the tiger's depredations, the Annamites had called on Thao, who was highly esteemed, to lead a general hunt and kill the tiger; but Thao's answer was, "Captain 4-Stripes not here; me not kill koukap."

The Annamites "captain" everybody. A common soldier is Captain No-stripes; a sub-lieutenant, Captain 1-Stripe, and so up to the admiral in command, who is Captain 10-Stripes. Even a wine-dealer is Captain Chem Choum, and an apothecary, Captain Ta bah (medicine).

When we arrived, D'Arfeuille promised Thao a hundred francs in gold—a small fortune for the place—if he succeeded in taking the tiger alive by his net plan, and he was working for it, as we say, like a tiger.

The next day he came in to tell us that the man-eater had been seen five miles from Bienhoa; that he had followed the trail, but found the country unsuited for netting. So we began to drive him by gunshots toward a dense wood at the foot of a mountain near the Moys of Baria. According to our Shekarry, all would be ready in two days; his nets were getting on finely, and would be ready by that time.

It was now Wednesday, and Saturday was set for the hunt. Thao left us, refusing offers made by Captain 3-Stripes (Dupleix) and Captain Klete (Sick), as he styled me. I had left my uniform at Saigon, and wore simply the usual blue flannel costume of Cochin China, with a white flannel cloak, so our Shekarry simplified matters by calling me Sick Captain.

The two days were taken up in our preparations, while from time to time reports came in of the movements of our tiger.

On Friday morning, Thao exhibited two splendid nets made of elephant-hide in strips. Each net was about five yards high and six broad. The meshes were lozenges about a foot high and eight inches broad. Thao assured us that no tiger could break, tear or bite through these meshes. We began to put some faith in the system after testing the strength of the net and trying to strain or break a mesh. Thao was in ecstasies. We now anticipated the most complete success.

D'Arfeuille gave the general orders for the hunt. A hundred Annamites, with tam-tams or some vessel to take its place, beating them and shouting, were to go ahead, encircle the man-eater's lair, and drive it toward the nets. Thao followed. Then came two hundred and fifty Mathas, or native troops, under their officers, to protect the tam-tam men, and in the meantime help them by shouts and volleys of musketry. Next were thirty mounted Spahis under Dupleix, ready to serve where needed. D'Arfeuille, also mounted, followed, surrounded by thirty Phous, or village mayors. Captain Sick, mounted on an elephant, came last, as a mere spectator, to see the fun.

We numbered at least three hundred for our tiger-net hunt.

During the night the town was in commotion. We took a turn around. Thao and his men were going through the huts, making a requisition for tam-tams or any dish or kettle that could be beaten, some, alas! to come back pretty well banged up. No one thought of that. The articles came readily out, each taking care to mark his own. It was going to serve against the tiger. D'Arfeuille's establishment was ransacked like the rest, and gave five, which made up the hundred.

A TIGER-HUNT IN COCHIN CHINA.—"I TOLD MY ELEPHANT-DRIVER TO ADVANCE A LITTLE. THEN I BEHELD AN ENORMOUS TIGER POISED IN THE AIR, HIS HEAD AND FOUR PAWS CAUGHT IN THE NET."

At two in the morning all was still, and the village slept in peace. At seven, all the hunters were assembled at the barracks, and presented a fine spectacle, the European dresses mingling with the quainter styles of the East. I mounted D'Arfeuille's elephant with John, my orderly, behind me, holding my rifle, and we started to capture the King of the Jungles.

About half-way, the tam-tam men and the Mathas left us, and took another route that was to lead them behind the tiger's lair. The man-eater had spent the night just where Thao had planned and wished.

The heat was not very great, as it had rained from three to six; the ground was still damp, and helped us by not giving our scent to the brute.

We reached the foot of the mountain after marching about an hour. There, amid the vast clearing, ran out a wood of cocoas and palms, in which we saw jungles and undergrowth. We had reached our destination and found the place well chosen. Our guides showed us, on our left, the two nets skillfully stretched between trees, and just above the undergrowth, which here often was twelve or fifteen feet.

As the tiger came bounding on, he was to be drawn in this direction, and would thus in one of his leaps plunge headforemost into the net, which, in the dense darkness, he would not perceive till too late.

The weight of his body would tighten the meshes, and he would be thus suspended in the air like a spider in its net.

We waited in silence, keeping far enough away not to divert the animal.

An anxious half-hour passed.

[For continuation, see page 115.]